Shepherds

NOVEMBER, 1955

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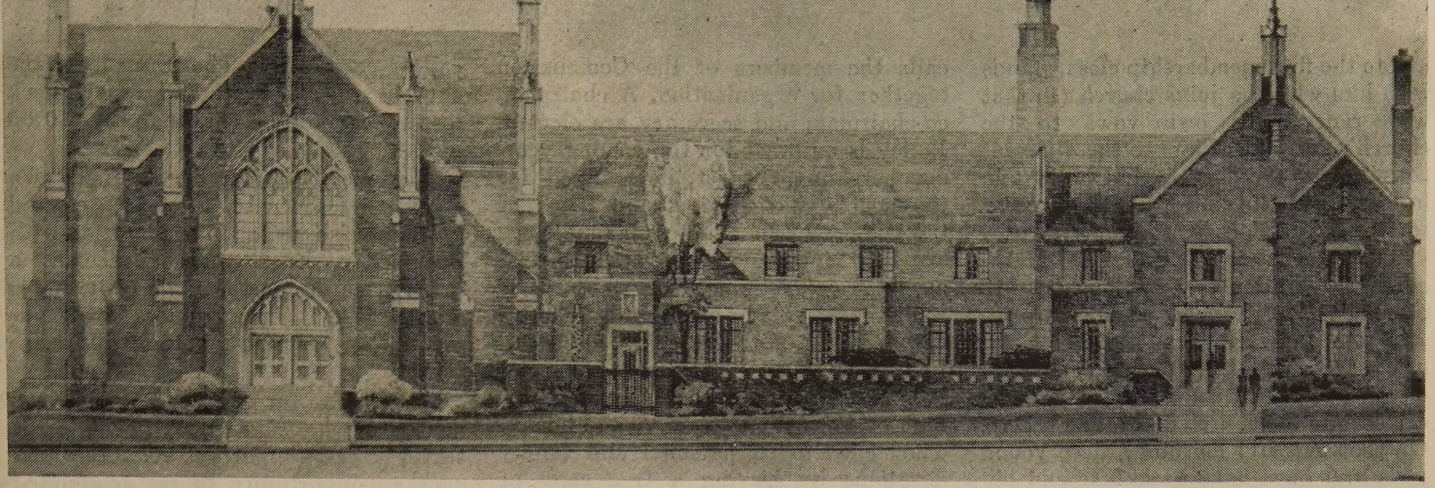


THIS LOCAL CHURCH GROWS ON EVANGELISM

by Dean C. Wolf
Associate Editor, *Farm Journal*

HERE is a heart-warming story of how a pastor applied the modern tools of evangelism to a run-down church back in 1936 and in 15 years saw that same church named one of the 12 great churches of America.

It's a story of challenge, of hope, and of opportunity for ministers and lay leaders of churches everywhere.

The church is the Collegiate Methodist in Ames, Iowa, home of Iowa State College. Its pastor is 61-year-old Dr. G. S. Nichols, a spell-binding preacher with deep convictions and untiring devotion to his work and a man whose vocabulary doesn't contain the word "can't."

A Big Job

When Reverend "Nick," as his congregation calls him, came to Ames 20 years ago, he found a big job to be done.

Collegiate Methodist was run down at the heels and buckling at the knees. Membership was a scant 300 despite the fact that it was located in a thriving city of 12,000 and located across the street from Iowa State College with its large faculty and 4,500 students, one-fourth of whom express Methodism as their Church of preference. The church was $140,000 in debt. There wasn't enough money to repair the furnace so the building could be heated for Sunday worship. The benevolence budget, one of the best indicators of the spiritual health of a congregation, was a mere $45.

That was the situation that might have scared away many a minister just reaching his prime. But not Reverend "Nick" and his good wife! They saw here a big opportunity to do a tough job for their Christ. They saw a deeper-rooted trouble than the symptoms of the Great Depression and figured the real problem was one they could do something about. Their diagnosis was that there was really nothing wrong at Collegiate Methodist that a good program of evangelism couldn't cure.

Above: Collegiate Methodist Church, Ames, Iowa.

A Big Potential

That was the challenge that brought the Nicholses to Ames instead of their accepting opportunities to step in to going, thriving churches elsewhere. As Reverend "Nick" puts it, "We saw a big potential here for God's work, a fertile field for evangelism to work."

And work it did. In 1951, fifteen years after they came to Ames, Reverend and Mrs. "Nick" saw Collegiate Methodist honored as one of the 12 most successful churches in America, selected by other Protestant ministers in a nation-wide vote taken by the *Christian Century* magazine.

Today, membership stands at 1,244, over four times the handful of 300 back in 1936. And, it's still growing! The church is out of debt. A contract was let on June 28, 1955, for completion of a much-needed student center at a cost of $340,000. This will realize one of Reverend "Nick's" long-time dreams—to get his young people up out of the basement. The benevolence budget has grown from $45.00 to $8,885.00.

"All of this growth, by whatever measure you choose, is largely the result of evangelism and evangelistic stewardship," declares Reverend Nichols.

Cornerstone of the evangelistic program at Collegiate Methodist is visitation evangelism. Teams of lay volunteers spend a day each quarter calling on prospective new members and winning them to God and the Church. Interest among laymen in giving their time and effort to carry out the program of visitation has grown right along with the program itself.

When this approach was first attempted in the church 12 years ago, only five lay people could be induced to participate. This year, 75 different people made hundreds of visits for this cause.

Results this year are astounding proof that membership is still growing at a fast clip. Visitation evangelism brought 300 new members to the church. These include 83 by profession of faith, 161 by transfer, and 156 by affiliation. Member growth exceeded the goals, set up at the beginning of the year, of 75 by profession of faith, 125 by transfer, and 100 by affiliation. Reverend "Nick" believes there is just no end to what can be done in increasing the church's membership roll and at the same time intensifying the devotion of each member to the church program.

Training Classes

New members quickly catch hold of the spirit of evangelism that rings through Collegiate Methodist through organized adult membership training classes. They soon work like old hands at the job of winning other new members. All members, including affiliate members, receive training in membership classes which meet for six lessons.

New members don't have much of a chance to get lost in the crowd. Each new member has a sponsor who brings

him to the first membership class, stands with him when he joins church (in that way renews his own vows to the church), introduces him to the different activities of the church, and helps him in many ways to find a useful place of service in the church program.

They start young at Collegiate Methodist. In addition to adult membership classes, there is regular membership instruction for sixth graders. The class meets for a two-hour period each Sunday for eight weeks. This group is received into the church on Mother's Day. On that eventful morning, these young girls and boys have breakfast and observe Holy Communion at the church with their parents. It's a memorable occasion in their young Christian lives; and, by making it so, Reverend "Nick" hopes it'll have a long-time steadying influence on their spiritual growth. A special class is set up for those girls and boys in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades who missed the training in the sixth grade.

Moving spirit behind the entire program of evangelism is Miss Mary Baird, Director of Evangelism. She untiringly and devotedly keeps the visitation teams of volunteers enthusiastically on the job. She spends many hours at her telephone, and in visiting homes, to solicit help of volunteers and reminding others of the big job to be done. As Reverend "Nick" says, "We never could undertake such a program, or ever hope for the results we are getting, without able lay leadership and enthusiastic help from many volunteers."

Active Commission

All work of the evangelism program is directed by the Commission on Membership and Evangelism. At the beginning of the Conference year, the pastor calls the members of the Commission together for organization. A chairman, co-chairman, and secretary are elected. Policy is outlined for the coming year, membership goals set, dates fixed for the quarterly visitation, and items of the budget discussed. Regular meetings are held once a quarter, with special meetings called as needed.

Plans this year for reaching inactive and negligent members centered around Lenten Loyalty Visitation of all members on the Sunday before the beginning of Lent. Volunteers visited homes. They encouraged personal and family devotions by leaving a free copy of *The Upper Room* and other devotional materials. A program was set up to deepen the spiritual lives of all members and to stimulate attendance and participation in the church by friendly fellowship visitation, phone calls, publicity, and literature. Spiritual growth groups were given all possible assistance.

Visitors Trained

Before the teams of evangelistic visitors go calling on prospective new members, they receive special training for their important jobs. Group meetings of evangelism team members are held. An evangelism dinner takes place the evening before visitation day. Volunteer workers are instructed on how to approach and interview a prospect. The sponsor system and membership classes are explained. They are armed with the scheduled dates for the reception and class periods for new members. Each is sent a booklet or leaflet two weeks ahead of visitation day to help them prepare for the work of evangelism.

On the day of visitation, each volunteer worker sets out with five prospect cards. If prospects are not home, a calling card is left. The teams leave the church at 7:00 P.M. and report back to the committee chairman by 10:00 P.M.

New members may choose their own sponsors. Otherwise, they are selected by the parish visitor in cooperation with the pastor. Each sponsor receives a letter from the pastor and a copy of his duties. When their services are completed, they receive a note of appreciation.

A reception for those prospective new members who sign commitment cards serves a very important role. It offers each an opportunity to get acquainted with other members and group leaders. They get the "feel" of belonging. Presidents, organization heads, and superintendents of church school departments have a chance to portray the opportunities and privileges of the church.

Instruction given in membership classes follows the outline of *The Methodist Primer*. Opportunity is given for questions and answers in an effort to help the new member gain a complete understanding of his church and what it stands for. This follows Reverend "Nick's" belief that many lukewarm church members are the result of either misunderstanding about their church or ignorance of what it stands for.

Church Publications

Church publications for the home are presented. Personnel sheets and pledge cards are given each member during the lesson on Christian stewardship. Emphasis is placed on the stewardship of one's time and talents as well as tithe. Pledges are made during the last class session.

Follow-up of new members is important. Every effort is made to see that they grow in the church and become active members. The parish visitor pays each new member a visit to see if each is finding a place of service and if there is anyone continuing to take an interest in them. Follow-up visits are made by the unit chairman or lay members and the pastor. The sponsor continues to help the new member find his niche in the church program.

Thus, through an organized program of finding new member prospects, winning them to Christ, teaching them to enjoy the work of the church, and helping older members grow in Christian service, the Collegiate Methodist Church has made, and is continuing to make, record gains in membership and in serving the Lord. As Reverend "Nick" so aptly puts it, "This church thrives and grows on a steady diet of evangelism. It's the key to church growth."

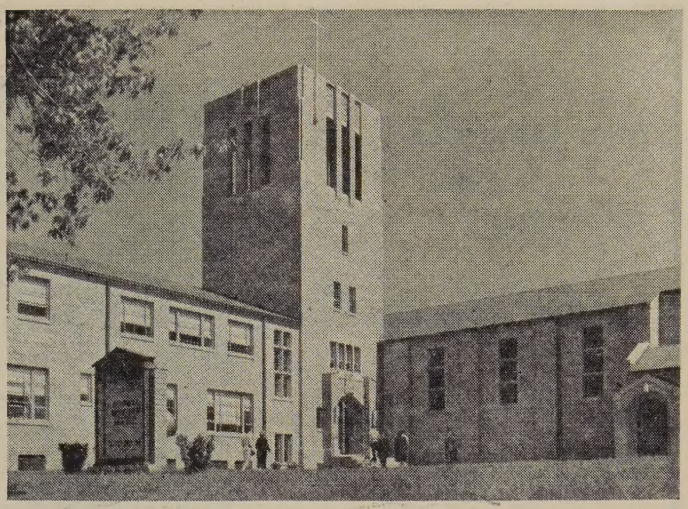
Shown left to right are Dr. and Mrs. Pak Chue Chan, of China; Carlos Contag, of Ecuador; and Clara Adams, of Baltimore, Maryland. These are new members recently received into Collegiate Methodist Church. People from various countries and races are in almost every membership class.

Growth of One Church

by

Evelyn Smith Whittaker

Pekin, Illinois



First Methodist Church of Pekin, Illinois, has found that a church can grow—and grow rapidly—during a building program. The active membership, under the leadership of Joseph Albrecht, pastor, has increased from 827 to 1,562 in the last five years. The largest gain was made in the last year when 217 people were received into the church and when baptisms reached an all-time high.

Two Morning Services

A new church was erected at a cost of $400,000 on a site overlooking Pekin's park lake. Although the seating capacity of the new sanctuary is over 500, two morning services, one at 8:15 and one at 10:45, are necessary to accommodate the ever increasing numbers. An assistant minister, Patrick Bacchus, was hired a year ago to ease the load of the Rev. Mr. Albrecht.

There are now 23 classrooms, and Sunday school registration has increased from 416 to the present enrollment of 754. This includes a second Sunday school session organized about a year ago for youngsters from Cradle Roll through third-grade age level, making church attendance convenient for the parents of younger children. This second Sunday school session constitutes one-third of the Sunday school's enrollment.

Other organizations of the church have also shown a marked increase. The Woman's Society of Christian Service has added two new circles. It has grown from 132 members to 191 members in this five-year period. This organization can be especially proud of its part in reducing the church indebtedness. With an ultra-modern kitchen at their disposal, the women of the church have showed their ingenuity in preparing and serving large banquets. Six hundred people have been served at one time by opening up the Fellowship Hall, which joins the main dining room to make one continuous room. Table and kitchen chairmen work closely on all details so that efficient service is assured. Profits from this and special projects of its own members were responsible for the clearing of over $11,000 in the past year.

The Men's Club has seen its membership triple. For the last three years, the men have entered into a unique project which has also been a profitable one—the selling of Christmas trees and greens. The first year's venture was so successful that trees were sold from two locations the following year. Both are located on busy thoroughfares. Trees were purchased in carload lots, and a schedule was set up whereby members would be on hand at all times to handle the sale of the trees. This last year these sales profited the club $3,000.00.

New organizations of the church are the Intermediate Youth Fellowship and the "Mr. and Mrs." Club. The latter has organized the young married people of the church, and the membership of this group is growing fast. The work of the Shepherd's Club, the Fisherman's Club, and the Commission on Membership and Evangelism has been especially outstanding. They have been instrumental in adding many of the new members to the church roll.

These increased activities of the church have also necessitated increases in expenditures. The annual budget has been stepped up from $6,000 to $25,000 in the last five years. Benevolences have jumped from $2,468 to $6,349. The services of a full-time secretary are now required.

Debt Reduction

Under Mr. Albrecht's leadership, the debt has been reduced far beyond the expectations of its members. Last year $25,000 was paid on the indebtedness. It is now believed that a debt that could have run for over a 20-year period can be paid off within the next five years.

First Methodist Church of Pekin is proud of its progress. It is proud of a faith strong enough to enter into a building program and proud of its ever-increasing membership. But most of all, it is proud of its spiritual growth and influence in the community which it serves.

Shown above is an exterior view of the new $400,000 edifice of First Methodist Church, of Pekin, Illinois. At left, 33 persons unite with First Methodist Church.

Miss Margaret T. Applegarth Is First Woman to Receive The Upper Room Citation

Miss Margaret T. Applegarth is the first woman to receive the Upper Room Citation for outstanding leadership in the field of World Christian Fellowship. The citation is to be presented at a special service in the Upper Room Chapel on Friday, September 30, by Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of THE UPPER ROOM.

Joining in the service, and co-sponsors of the event, are the United Church Women of Tennessee. Mrs. John McCall, Tennessee president, will preside. Following the service a reception is planned. Mrs. Starkey Duncan, president of the W.S.C.S. of the Tennessee Conference, is chairman of the committee in charge of the reception.

Miss Applegarth, best known as an author of thirty books, has been in constant demand as a speaker and Bible lecturer at conferences of the various denominations as well as of her own denomination, American Baptist, and at ecumenical meetings at home and abroad. She has the unique honor of having been elected a life member of the national women's organizations of a number of denominations, among them Methodist, Southern Presbyterian, Evangelical and Reformed, and American Lutheran.

For nine years Miss Applegarth served as national and international chairman of the World Day of Prayer. During her first year less than two thousand observances were held on the First Friday of Lent. In nine years the observance grew steadily so that it is believed that more than fifteen thousand observances were held during the ninth year. Each of those nine years Miss Applegarth wrote a practical handbook for leaders of the event. She crammed it with suggestions that are still being followed. Governors and mayors proclaim the First Friday as a day of Public Prayer. Church bells are rung every hour on the hour to call attention to the event. Observances are held in neighborhood churches instead of just one downtown sanctuary. The offerings which leaped from less than $9,000.00 to $95,000.00 have grown so that they are now used to sponsor numerous projects in the U.S.A. and abroad.

Previous winners of The Upper Room Citation have been: John R. Mott, Frank Laubach, Ralph S. Cushman, Jesse Bader, John MacKay.

The World Christian Fellowship Number of THE UPPER ROOM this year contains authors from fifty countries, and except for Miss Applegarth, whose meditation appears on September 1, none of them are from the United States.

Among Miss Applegarth's best known books are two recent ones, *Men as Trees Walking* and *Moment by Moment*. The latter has chapters on the spiritual classics which will be read with great interest by Methodist women as they study St. Augustine, Thomas á Kempis, Brother Lawrence, William Law, and Thomas Kelly.

New Wire Display Rack Now Ready

Meeting a need for a display rack for THE UPPER ROOM in stores and on newsstands is the item displayed here. Designed to hold twelve copies of THE UPPER ROOM, it conveniently hooks over the shelf of a magazine display rack. It can very readily be used on a counter near the cash register. The ministry of THE UPPER ROOM in stores and newsstands is one of increasing importance. Most stores and store managers are glad to cooperate.

In stores the sale price of THE UPPER ROOM is usually 10 cents. This has always been the single copy price printed in THE UPPER ROOM itself. The profit

is thus five cents per copy. Some stores are glad to handle this item as a service project. In many cases the profit is returned to the church or sponsoring group.

The wire rack shown here is available from THE UPPER ROOM at fifty cents each. The sale of just ten copies at the single copy price will pay this cost.

The Church Attendance Movement

Brings Inspiring Experiences

As Pastor and People Worship God Together

THE most important feature of the Church's program and life is the worship service. This is the high hour when people and pastor gather to share in the means of grace which the Church alone supplies.

Worship brings men into the conscious presence of God and causes them to see their lives and all of life in the light of His mind and will. It causes men to see things more nearly as God sees them. When persons worship together remarkable things happen: sins are confronted and confessed, forgiveness is sought and faith reaffirmed, lives are rededicated to God's high purpose, God's light and love come into hearts, and strength is secured for daily life.

Vital Sunday Services

Other church activities, as fine as they are—both on Sunday and during other days and nights of the week—somehow or other revolve around and depend on great Sunday services. Persons can be attracted to Sunday services, where "all" of the people are present and where the express purpose is the public worship of God, as they can to no other service.

Likewise, the Sunday worship services are the starting point of a full church program, fellowship programs, educational, evangelistic, missionary, stewardship, social service—in fact, all church purposes and plans and programs somehow or other fit into and/or spring from the Sunday services.

For this reason that which starts as a Church Attendance Campaign, rightly looked at, carried on, and developed will not stop until it becomes a full, well-rounded total church program. A church attendance *campaign* in a local church or community, when it becomes a real movement, will build up the Sunday school, the evening fellowship groups, the woman's missionary activities, the men's brotherhood, the midweek prayer services and prayer life of the church, the youth fellowship and outreach program, and all else.

The church attendance movement, rightly developed, not only will bring regular members to church more often, but it will attract outsiders who are waiting only for those who *call* themselves Christian, to *show* themselves Christian and to become enthusiastic and zealous about it.

A church attendance movement will locate many prospects, cultivate them, bring them into the fellowship, and win them for Christ and His Church. Thus that which might start as only a church attendance campaign, not only can revitalize the spiritual life and holy habits of the church members but can become a great evangelistic movement.

A church attendance campaign, born in prayer, guided by the Holy Spirit, begun the first of January, and carefully planned and executed will be the means of many new persons brought to Christ before Easter.

A carefully planned Church Attendance Movement increases congregations at the worship services.

Better Worship Services

The very fact that a church is planning for a church attendance movement will create the desire for better and more helpful church services.

This desire and the execution and sharing of better church services affects more than the pastor and the worship leaders. It affects every church member, every attender. Each attender must learn to become a worshipper; he must practice the art of worship, each for himself, in his own heart. Thus

each person who has anything to do with the attendance movement becomes a part of the "better services" feature of the movement.

Better services are made by better people. Better worshipers are required; better listeners, with more receptive hearts, more eager to have the good seed of the gospel sown in their hearts, more eager to see God and to follow the guidance of His Spirit.

To be sure, the pastor, the pianist or organist, the song leader, the choir, the whole Commission or Committee on Worship, the ushers, and such like, have tremendous responsibility for better services. Certainly variety of services, warmth, dignity, beauty, interest, vital subjects related to God and to life—all such things are indispensable. (Many suggestions along various lines are provided the pastor in the "Pastor's Resource Book" that comes in the Church Attendance Packet.) But nothing helps a church service more than praying, expectant, happy people who form the congregation.

Let them rejoice in the day that the Lord hath made. Let them be glad to go into the house of the Lord. Let them enter into His courts with thanksgiving, into His presence with prayer and with praise.

A Contrite Heart

Let them follow the example and have the experience of Isaiah of old. Isaiah, first of all, saw God, His character, His holiness. Then he saw himself, unworthy, unholy, unclean. This gave him a contrite heart, led him to a confession, and gave him a great desire to be better, purer, truer. Confession brought cleansing. Following the cleansing there came the commission, God's commission to him, telling him God's desire for his life. Being commissioned, Isaiah obeyed and became God's man.

The Answer Is God

Let each church member and everyone who worships in your church during your church attendance campaign be brought face to face with the fact, over and over again, that God *has* the answer—indeed that He *is* the answer —to his every need. It is no secret what God can do. God is the answer to every individual's personal problem, if only he will "let go and let God." God is the complete answer to the sin problem. God is the answer to every problem and every need in his home life, if only he and his family will take God into the home. God is the answer to every problem and need in his work life, his social life, his physical life, his spiritual life.

God is the answer to all community problems, national problems, world problems. God is "all and in all," and complete commitment to Him is all that a person—any person, any family, any community, any nation, and even the whole world—needs.

So the theme or slogan of this Church Attendance Movement is "The Answer Is God." The sub-themes enjoin a person to do something about it in his own heart and life, beginning right where he is:

"Worship Him every week in church"
"Worship Him every day in your home"

Church Attendance Packet

The best way for a church to get a sufficient amount of materials to promote the "The Answer Is God" attendance movement is to order a packet according to the size of its membership, as follows:

3c per member

	Members	*Price*
Packet No. 1	100	$ 3.00
Packet No. 1½	150	4.50
Packet No. 2	200	6.00
Packet No. 2½	250	7.50
Packet No. 3	300	9.00
Packet No. 3½	350	10.50
Packet No. 4	400	12.00
Packet No. 4½	450	13.50
Packet No. 5	500	15.00
Packet No. 5½	550	16.50
Packet No. 6	600	$18.00
Packet No. 6½	650	19.50
Packet No. 7	700	21.00
Packet No. 7½	750	22.50
Packet No. 8	800	24.00
Packet No. 8½	850	25.50
Packet No. 9	900	27.00
Packet No. 9½	950	28.50
Packet No. 10	1000	30.00

Churches of over 1,000 members may order more than one packet. We suggest that such churches not order according to their reported membership, but according to the number of "resident" members into whose hands they are going to actually put the "Church Member's Loyalty Covenant" card and the "My Record of Attendance" card.

World Wide Church Attendance Movement

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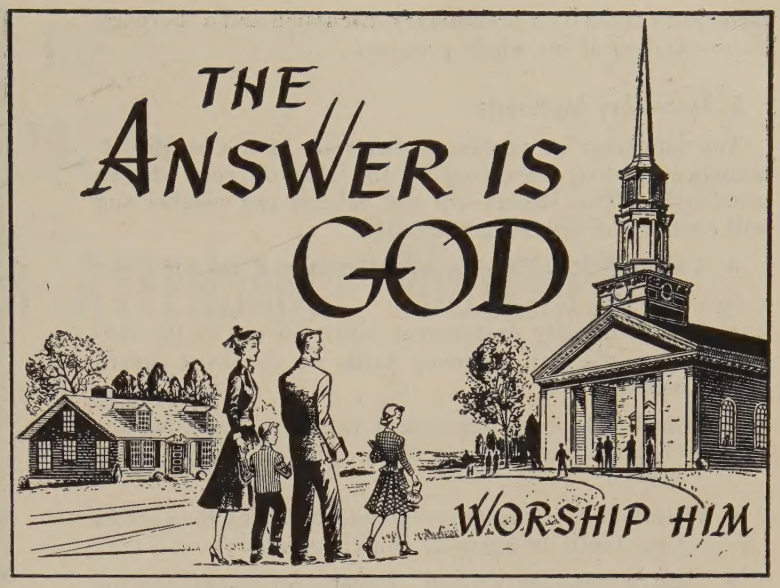
Organizing the Local Church for the 1956



WORLD WIDE CHURCH ATTENDANCE MOVEMENT

PASTORS are urged to plan now for the 1956 Church Attendance Movement. They should avoid being too rushed by the Christmas season to lay firm foundations for this vital campaign to promote the worship of God. To be ready for the launching of this Movement, it is wise for ministers and Commissions on Membership and Evangelism to order the essential materials right away. The following procedures will help substantially in organizing the local church for the World Wide Church Attendance Movement.

1. Commission on Membership and Evangelism

The organization of the Church Attendance Movement in the local church is the responsibility of the *Commission* (or Committee) *on Membership and Evangelism.* The pastor and the chairman of this Commission should suggest this Movement to the Commission and ask for its adoption at the October or the November meeting. Specific responsibility could be assigned to the Committee on Church Attendance.

The Commission or Committee determines the policies of the Movement in the local church, appoints the necessary committees, and gives general supervision. Of course, any Commission and church can determine its own policies, and should do so, in the light of local personalities and circumstances, but experience has proved over and over again that "short cuts" should not be taken. There is no easy road to success, and results are nearly always commensurate with efforts expended. This is to say that a church is strongly urged to put on as nearly as possible the full program suggested in the Local Church booklet.

2. The Official Board

The Committee (and pastor) should present the plan of the Movement to the Official Board and secure its approval and support. This places every organization and group in the church behind the program.

The Board should make provision for adequate funds to provide necessary materials. In most instances the loose change dropped in the offering plates by the extra people brought to the services will more than pay for all materials, but the Official Board should underwrite the full expenses of the materials and authorize its treasurer to pay for them.

3. Committees

The more people who are put to work and are really active in the Movement, the greater the success will be. During the three months every member should do certain things:

- sign the church member's loyalty covenant card
- attend every possible worship service
- speak and telephone to other persons to be present
- make at least one friendly visit in the interest of the church and the program

However, certain committees will be found indispensable:

- Publicity and Promotion
- Registration and Prospects
- Friendly Membership Visitation
- Fellowship and Cultivation
- Individual and Family Devotions
- Visitation Evangelism

These committees will share the total responsibility of the entire program and divide the duties so that every task will be assigned to a particular committee and carried out by it. The suggested personnel and duties of these committees are listed elsewhere in the Local Church booklet.

Every committee and committee chairman will work in close contact and cooperation with the pastor for complete understanding, harmony, integration, and maximum success.

4. Executive Committee

It may be well, but not completely necessary, that the chairman of each of the committees meet with the pastor and the Commission chairman when the materials are ordered. Certainly, they should meet together as an Executive Committee later on after the materials are received. They can

accomplish much by a preliminary discussion and a thorough understanding of the whole program.

5. Necessary Materials

The minimum of necessary materials is a Church Attendance Packet, according to the size of your church membership. This Packet will cost only 3¢ per member and will contain the following materials:

- A Church Member's Loyalty Covenant Card for every member
- Church Loyalty Assignment cards, for use by the visitors (one half as many cards as you have church members)
- Friendly Visitor's Agreement cards, for enlisting the visitors (one tenth as many cards as church members)
- Visitation Assignment envelopes, for use by the visitors (one tenth as many as church members)
- "Instructions for Visitors" leaflets, for instructing the visitors
- "Visitor's Guidance Folders"—one for each visitor
- Door Knob cards, for visitors to leave for not-at-homes
- "My Record of Attendance" cards, one for every church member

6. Ordering Materials

The pastor and Commission chairman should get together and order the necessary first materials. (This should be done in October or November.)

- A one-column and a two-column newspaper mat of the "The Answer Is God" emblem.
- Window cards, vestibule posters, and stamps, containing the emblem—in quantities according to the size of the church
- A few copies of the booklet, "The Church Attendance Movement in Your Church"
- A "Pastor's Resource Book" with many practical suggestions and helps

Be sure to order the Packet at once. You will need all of these materials early. In the Packet will be samples of certain optional materials that might be ordered later.

7. Some Final Suggestions

Let the rank and file of your members not be concerned about this Movement until after Christmas.

Let them do a good job by observing the holy season in a holy way.

Let the Commission on Membership and Evangelism complete all necessary preparations at its December meeting.

Let the visitors be secured for the visitation beginning New Year's Sunday, and pledged to be present for the Sunday afternoon visitation.

Let the visitors be "paired off" in advance for "two by two" visitations.

Let everything be made in readiness for a full week of activity between Christmas and New Year's, even to clearing with local radio and newspapers for time and space for forthcoming announcements and articles.

Promotional Materials for the 1956 Church Attendance Movement

Only samples of the following helpful materials are in the Church Attendance Packet. For quantities, order them separately and get extra results.

Letterheads, 8½x11 inches, mimeograph paper, 75¢ per 100
Letterhead says "World Wide Church Attendance Movement," and contains the "The Answer Is God" emblem, and another brief statement.

Printed Letters, 8½x11 inches $1.00 per 100
On the above letterhead, an appropriate letter is printed, ready for signing and mailing to members and constituents. It announces the Church Attendance Movement and requests full cooperation.

Church Bulletins $1.00 per 100
A printed bulletin, for use on the first Sunday or early in the Movement. Delivered flat, so that inside of bulletin may be mimeographed or printed locally with local church program announcements.

Bulletin Inserts (5 in set) 5¢ per set
Five different two-color (5½x8½) bulletin inserts, printed on both sides and ready for inserting in your regular bulletin. Designed to stimulate church attendance and individual and family devotions. Minimum order, 50 sets.

Personal Invitation Cards $1.00 per 100
A card folder, containing the "The Answer Is God" emblem, and a personal invitation to attend church. Designed to be signed by an individual or church official and handed or mailed to persons.

"Fill a Pew Plan" leaflet 10 or more, 3¢ each
A practical plan for building up church attendance. Each pew captain will need a leaflet. Single copies, 5¢ each.

Hymnal Bands $1.00 per 100
A band to go around front cover of hymnal, advertise the Movement, and furnish special Responsive Reading for it. Minimum order, 50.

Certificate of Loyalty $1.00 per 100
To issue at the close of the Movement to those who have been especially faithful in attendance. Minimum order, 25.

World Wide
Church Attendance Movement
1908 Grand Avenue
Nashville 5, Tennessee

THE 1956 WORLD WIDE CHURCH ATTENDANCE MOVEMENT

January 1 to Easter

Church Attendance is the key to growth—nothing much happens to persons until they are exposed to the gospel, fellowship, and the divine presence. "The Answer Is God."

NEW FEATURES IN THIS YEAR'S MOVEMENT

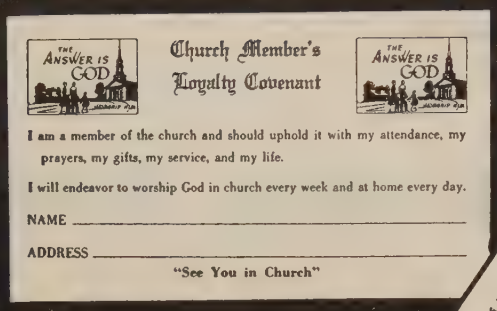
Several new features have been added to the suggested program for this year's Church Attendance Movement. They have been born out of experience and should make participation in the movement eminently productive and worth while for any church. In fact, those who have had similar programs in other years should reap even larger benefits from this year's program which is designed to be more truly a real *movement.* Among the new features are:

1. A new church member's loyalty covenant card.
2. A Covenant Sunday Service opening the program—
   - extremely appropriate on New Year's Day, Sunday, January 1.
3. A more definite and workable time schedule in launching the movement.
4. A month-by-month emphasis, January through March
   - in line with total program of the Church
   - assures better participation and greater results.
5. A final emphasis on evangelism
   - in line with the Great Commission
   - assures a greater Easter ingathering.

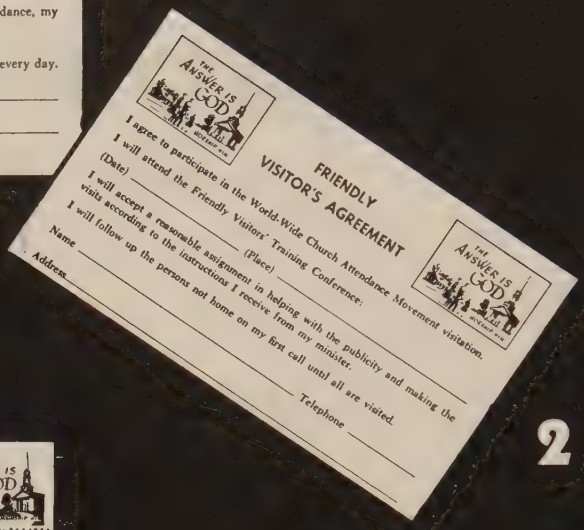
***For further information write to*—WORLD WIDE CHURCH ATTENDANCE MOVEMENT**

1908 Grand Avenue

Nashville 5, Tennessee


THE ANSWER IS GOD
Church Member's
Loyalty Covenant
I am a member of the church and should uphold it with my attendance, my prayers, my gifts, my service, and my life.
I will endeavor to worship God in church every week and at home every day.
NAME
ADDRESS
"See You in Church"

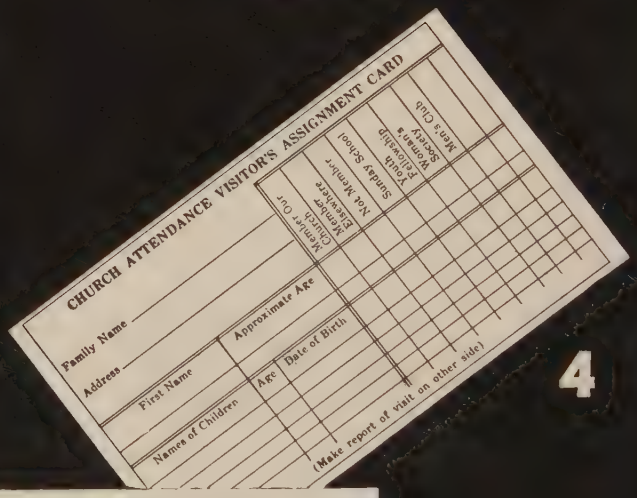
1


THE ANSWER IS GOD
FRIENDLY
VISITOR'S AGREEMENT
I agree to participate in the World-Wide Church Attendance Movement visitation.
I will attend the Friendly Visitors' Training Conference:
(Date)
(Place)
I will accept a reasonable assignment in helping with the publicity and making the visits according to the instructions I receive from my minister.
I will follow up the persons not home on my first call until all are visited.
Name
Address
Telephone

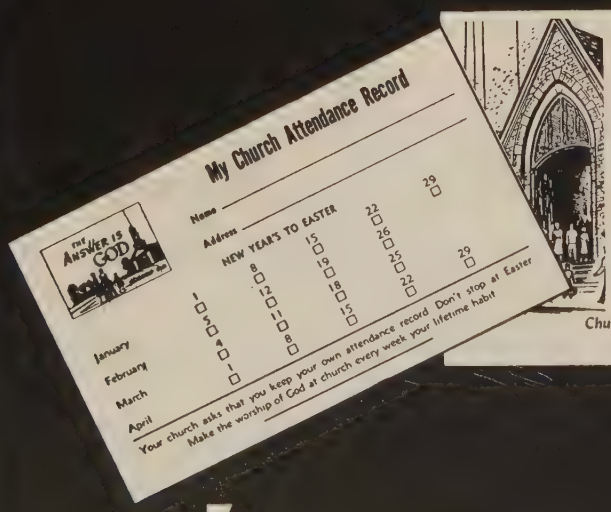
2

THE ANSWER IS GOD

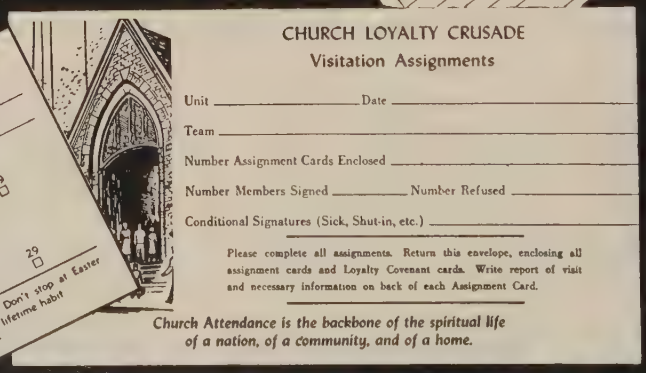
3


CHURCH ATTENDANCE VISITOR'S ASSIGNMENT CARD
Family Name
Address
Approximate Age
First Name
Age
Date of Birth
Names of Children
Member Our Church
Member Elsewhere
Not Member
Sunday School
Youth Fellowship
Women's Society
Men's Club
(Make report of visit on other side)

4


THE ANSWER IS GOD
My Church Attendance Record
Name
Address
NEW YEAR'S TO EASTER
January
February
March
April
Your church asks that you keep your own attendance record. Don't stop at Easter. Make the worship of God at church every week your lifetime habit

5


CHURCH LOYALTY CRUSADE
Visitation Assignments
Unit
Date
Team
Number Assignment Cards Enclosed
Number Members Signed
Number Refused
Conditional Signatures (Sick, Shut-in, etc.)
Please complete all assignments. Return this envelope, enclosing all assignment cards and Loyalty Covenant cards. Write report of visit and necessary information on back of each Assignment Card.
Church Attendance is the backbone of the spiritual life of a nation, of a community, and of a home.

6

The Answer Is GOD

Although interest in religion in the United States has skyrocked in recent years, the churches of this country must still face and meet a great evangelistic challenge. Forty-one per cent of our citizens, representing 69 million Americans, belong to no church at all; and of the 59 per cent who belong, numerous surveys have established the fact that no more than 35 per cent attend worship services in their church regularly. In addition to this, the swift, steady population growth promises a gain of more than 70 million within the next 35 years.

In order to meet this great need, the Church must work to increase the attendance of its members and develop a spirit of loyalty in those that are indifferent. The Church must also attract toward itself an ever-increasing number of "new prospects."

In recent years, many church and community groups have found that the most effective way to increase church attendance is through an organized Church Attendance Movement. A properly conducted Church Attendance Movement will not only bring regular members to the church more often, but it will also attract outsiders. Through it, many prospects can be located, cultivated, won to Christ, and brought into the fellowship of the Church.

The theme of this year's movement, "The Answer Is God," has been chosen to bring before the public—church member and non-church member alike—the fact that God *does* have the Answer—indeed, that He *is* the Answer—to all individual, family, and community problems.

To crystallize this truth, a program complete with plans and materials developed as a result of practical experience on the part of many churches is being ordered. This program is built around promotion and publicity, visitation, and special worship services.

To implement this program and to aid churches of all sizes in obtaining the proper amounts of materials to conduct a well-rounded campaign in their communities, there has been prepared a Church Attendance Packet containing the basic items, such as guidance booklets, instructions and materials for visitors, graphs and materials to register attendance at services, etc. Several of these items, illustrated on the preceding page, are described below.

Materials shown on opposite page and listed below are in the Church Attendance Packet but are available separately

These, and other helpful Church Attendance Movement Materials—for both promotion and publicity—may be obtained by writing to

World Wide Church Attendance Movement

1908 Grand Avenue

Nashville 5, Tennessee

A descriptive order blank folder, listing all the items prepared especially for the Movement, will be sent you upon request. Plan now to share this great World Wide Movement.

---

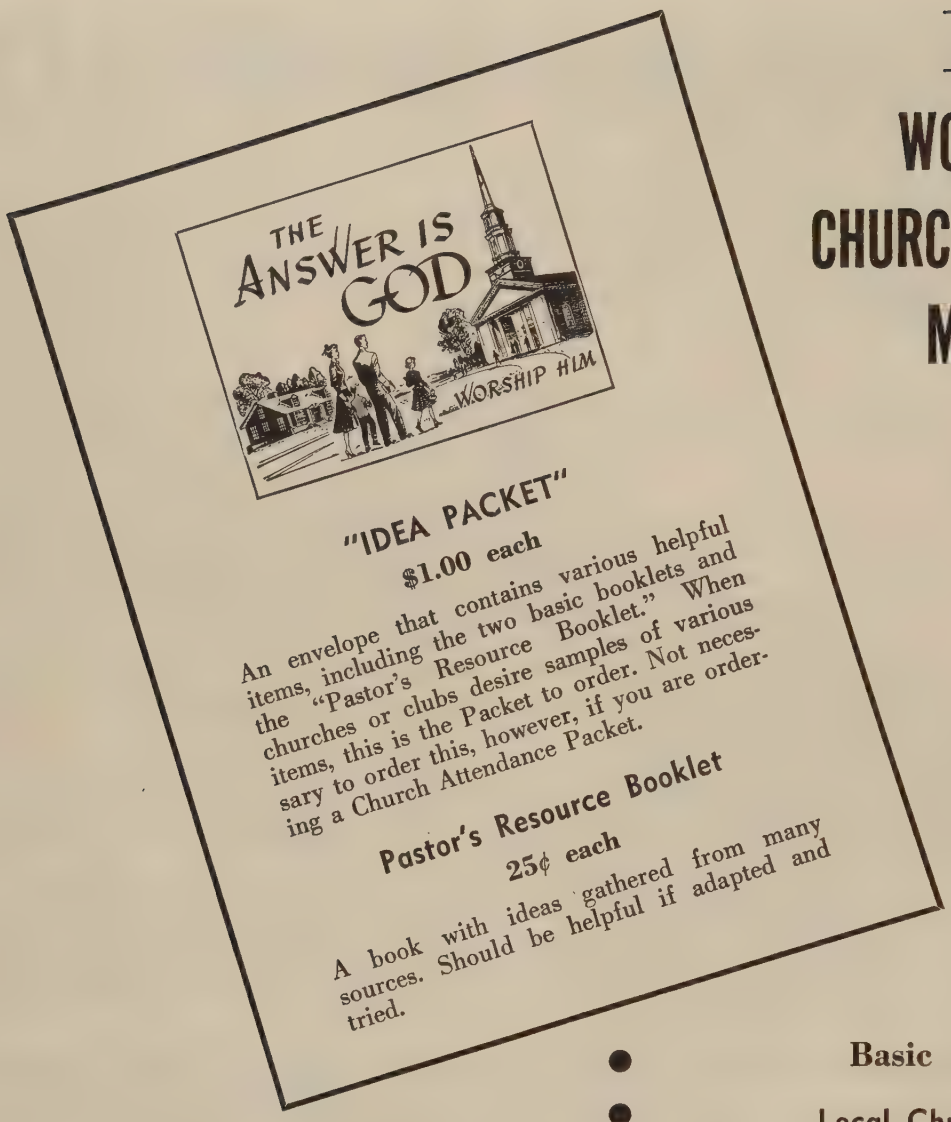
1. *Church Member's Loyalty Covenant* card (the basic card—for every member) 50c per 100
2. *Friendly Visitor's Agreement* cards (for enlisting the visitors) 50c per 100
3. *Sheets of Stamps* (100 two-color stamps to sheet, containing the emblem) 20c each; 6 sheets for $1.00
4. *Church Attendance Visitor's Assignment* cards (for assigning the visitors to the homes they are to visit)—60c per 100
5. *My Record of Attendance* cards (for a member to keep record of his own attendance) 50c per 100
6. *Church Loyalty Assignment* Envelopes (for use by your visitors) 10c each; 75c per 100

1956
WORLD WIDE CHURCH ATTENDANCE MOVEMENT

January 1

to

Easter



"IDEA PACKET"

$1.00 each

An envelope that contains various helpful items, including the two basic booklets and the "Pastor's Resource Booklet." When churches or clubs desire samples of various items, this is the Packet to order. Not necessary to order this, however, if you are ordering a Church Attendance Packet.

Pastor's Resource Booklet

25¢ each

A book with ideas gathered from many sources. Should be helpful if adapted and tried.

For the Members

Church Member's Loyalty Covenant Cards

50¢ per 100

The basic card in the Movement. To be used to get every resident member and constituent to covenant to attend church every Sunday. Packet contains one for every member.

My Record of Attendance Cards

50¢ per 100

To be given to every resident member and constituent for him to keep his own record of attendance for three months. Very helpful, and even necessary to greatest success. Packet contains one for every member.

Basic Booklets

Local Church Booklet

10¢ each; 6 for 50¢; 10 or more, 8¢ each

The "How" booklet for a church and the various committees in promoting the World Wide Church Attendance Movement. One or more copies come in the Church Attendance Packet and also in the "Idea Packet."

Community Booklet

10¢ each; 6 for 50¢; 10 or more, 8¢ each

The "How" booklet for a civic club, chamber of commerce, ministerial association, or other agency that desires to sponsor the Movement. One copy is in every Church Attendance Packet and "Idea Packet."

World Wide Church Attendance Movement
1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

GETTING HOLD OF SPIRITUAL POWER

by K. Morgan Edwards
Pastor, First Methodist Church
Pasadena, California

A LONG generation ago H. G. Wells and George Bernard Shaw crusaded enthusiastically for Fabian Socialism. One day, as H. G. Wells pleaded passionately for the solution of one of Britain's disturbing social problems, Shaw sat in the back of the audience. At the crucial moment Wells insisted, "Something ought to be done about this." Disconcertingly Shaw inquired, "What, for instance?"

The preacher points his rhetorical finger at man's spiritual impotence and exclaims, "Something ought to be done about this." The church-going layman, sensitive to his need, asks, "What, for instance?" Multitudes within the church long for spiritual mastery. It is the preacher's obligation to disclose resources and to lead men to the fountains of renewal.

Paul made the bold claim, "I can do all things in him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13 [R.S.V.]). In every age when Christianity has been a life-transforming force, Christians have believed that these empowering resources have been available to them. Dare we believe that Christianity offers this same dynamic power to us?

In order to explore the resources of our faith, let us raise two questions. First, why is it that we cannot control our conduct without faith in a power greater than we are? And, second, how does faith in God give us power to do and to be what in our best moments we long to be?

I

We are unable to do what we know we ought to do because of sin. Historically, the Christian Church has claimed that our moral impotence is the result of our sin. Yet while the Church has insisted that it is sin which keeps us from doing and being, churchmen are ambiguous about what sin really is. Many theologians are as enlightening with regard to sin as Senator Mundt was during an investigation when he said, "Evidence was clouding up, but it wasn't clear enough yet."

Jesus begins by looking upon sin not as an act, but as an attitude. He does not look at the actions of people and say, "This man, because of what he does, is righteous; and this man, because of what he does, is a sinner." The separation of the sheep from the goats belongs to God alone. Only the pharisee dare to usurp the divine prerogative and say, "these are sinners, and others are righteous."

More Than an Act

The New Testament makes it quite clear that sin is far more than an act. Sin is a state. Sin is an attitude. It is a condition, not an isolated incident. And though the saint himself would be the first to acknowledge that he does not achieve perfection when he is hospitable to the grace and the power of God, he recognizes that his condition is changed. His state is very different.

In the delineation of the idea of sin, let me suggest two words which I think do not too greatly oversimplify the positions of two profound twentieth-century religious thinkers. William Temple said

sin is self-centeredness. Paul Tillich says that sin is separation. Both are right. Temple was correct in saying that self-centeredness is the thing which keeps us away from God. Whenever a man is self-centered, he is kept away from God and separated from his brothers. And Tillich would say that, while self-centeredness is the cause of sin, the condition of sin is this separation from God.

Self-Centeredness

Consider the problem of self-centeredness. Dynamic psychology insists that if man is to obtain wholeness of personality he must overcome self-centeredness. He must get away from thinking only of the capital "I." He must stop concentrating on himself. One elementary prescription of psychology is that man must find an interest beyond himself. When man finds something which is more consuming than self-interest, for a moment, at least, he can get over his preoccupation with self.

The quest for truth can help to deliver a man from self-centeredness. However, there are occasions when the quest after truth only increases a man's self-centeredness. Bennett Cerf wrote of two newspaper men who interviewed a celebrated author. Their experience wasn't as bad as they had anticipated. When the interview was completed, one said to the other, "Well, he wasn't as conceited as I thought he was going to be." The other replied, "No, but he has so much to be humble about." When the seeker after truth thinks that he invents rather than discovers truth his ego does not diminish. It enlarges.

Seeker for Truth

If the truth seeker is perceptive and intelligent, he knows that the truth is bigger than he is and that he has simply laid hold upon something which has already existed. The skillful writer is one who knows that he creates a medium or a channel through which truth is able to express itself.

Man's problem of sin is this problem of being centered in himself instead of being rooted in something which is bigger than he is.

Now move to the second step with Paul Tillich and see how self-centeredness leads to separation. The minute that a man cannot harness himself to something bigger than he is he is separated from himself, from his neighbor, and from God.

Psychology helps us at this point, also. It says that man lacks power until he has internal unity. The religionist frequently encourages the pilgrim to seek singleness of heart. No man is a powerful individual until he has achieved inner unity. When a man is centered upon his selfish interests, he isn't internally unified. In that case, there are two selves—the real self and the selfish self.

The basis of Christian ethics is love for self: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." When a man is selfish, he doesn't love his true self. The true self of the selfish man cannot come to life. When a man is selfish, he really doesn't love himself. He doesn't hold himself in proper regard. Because he is selfish, he tries to lay hold upon things that prop him up from the outside. He isn't sure of the reality, power, and integrity of the self within.

Olin Stockwell went to prison with equanimity. He retained his poise even though his jailer exerted physical and mental cruelty because Stockwell was certain of the self on the inside. His self was the surrendered self. It had been laid hold upon by an eternal power which was bigger than anything that could be inflicted from the outside.

The man who has to make a name for himself in the community, who has to accumulate wealth, who has to stand on top of the world as a man of power is actually a very insecure individual. He is a man whose selfish self is fighting his real self. We say of such a man, "He is his own worst enemy."

Sin Is Selfishness

Sin is selfishness. Whenever selfishness sits on the throne of the heart, God doen't have a chance. Because sin is selfishness, it separates us from our real self. As selfish beings, we do not become beings of power.

But sin not only separates us from ourselves; it also separates us from our fellows. This separation from our brother is sin. There are times when we think that separation from others is peace.

Basic

PROTESTANT

Leaflets

IF MY DAUGHTER SHOULD WANT TO MARRY A ROMAN CATHOLIC

by Bishop H. Clifford Northcott

An excellent leaflet clearly outlining the difficulties involved in mixed marriages.

5¢ each; 25 or more, 4¢ each

PLAIN FACTS ABOUT PROTESTANTISM

by T. Otto Nall

Discusses the Protestant concept of the priesthood of all believers, justification by faith, the primacy of the scriptures, the reality of religious freedom, the necessity of Christian vocation.

$2.00 per 100

PROTESTANTS BELIEVE

Compiled—a brief tract stating succinctly many beliefs held in common by Protestants.

$1.00 per 100

TIDINGS

Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials

1908 Grand Avenue

Nashville 5, Tennessee

We have two dogs fighting. We put one on a chain and the other on a leash, separate them, and call that peace. That isn't peace; it is separation. We have achieved an armistice.

My wife and I have four boys. When two of the boys get to quarreling, for the sake of peace and quiet we get one to go into the den and the other out into the back yard. Actually, we don't have peace. We merely have quiet. We don't really achieve peace until we get them back in the same room and let them find a common endeavor. In that new adventure they overcome separation.

This principle is relevant in the world of nations. We bend much effort toward "peaceful co-existence." But co-existence isn't peaceful at all. It is an armed tension where one nation points its guns at another. This is separation. It can never be peace. Jesus didn't say "blessed are the peaceful." He said "blessed are the peacemakers." Peace is a dynamic thing. The peacemaker has to reduce the barriers which cause separation.

When we look at our relationships with other people, we find that we are separated not only across the chasm between east and west. Truly, by our lack of sensitivity, we are separated from those who are closest to us. And that separation is sin.

The Meaning of Community

I knew a devout Christian who would not allow his children to be coerced into eating spinach by being reminded of starving people around the world. A preacher's son, he had heard so much as a child about starving Armenians that this sensitive lad had not been able to enjoy his food. He determined that his children were going to be spared this anguish. But he was wrong. We are separated from our brothers in our comfort. We devise these techniques of separation to lessen our pain. But these devices lead to the sin of separation. As long as men suffer and are in anguish, food ought to create a lump in our throats. We ought to be able to feel their pain. This is the real meaning of community. Sin not only separates me from myself; it also separates me from my brother.

Because this is true, sin separates me from God himself. Whenever I am separated from the true self which God made or the other person whom God made as my brother, I am suffering the condition of the sin of separation. Fifteen hundred years ago Augustine understood this. His own inner separation led him to confess, "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our souls are restless until they find their rest in thee." In order to overcome all separation, we must find our way back to God. This reunion will break down the barrier of separation.

II

Ask yourself these simple questions. How does God empower me to overcome sin? How does God empower me to get Morgan Edwards (substitute your own name) out of the center of my life and put God there? How does God bridge the chasm which separates me, not only from the people of Russia, but, on the deepest level of compassion, from my very closest friend? Christianity insists that the answer is grace. By the grace of God, and only by the grace of God, can these things happen.

Here again the Christian community is ambiguous in its definition of grace. A lot of people think that grace is merely sentimentality. They look on God as a good-natured gentleman who will whitewash, instead of wash away, all their sins. They believe that God makes no moral distinction in what we do or are.

Grace is never sentimentality, C. S. Lewis wrote in *The Problem of Pain:*

> You asked for a loving God; you have one . . . the "lord of terrible aspect," . . . not . . . senile benevolence . . . not . . . cold philanthropy . . . but the consuming fire Himself, . . . Love . . . persistent as the artist's love for . . . work and despotic as . . . man's love for a dog, provident and venerable as a father's love for a child, jealous, inexorable, exacting as love between the sexes.

God's grace is not the product of spiritual house-cleaning which permits us to do as we please because God will wipe the slate clean. If this were so, God would have no moral significance at all.

Spiritual Growth

Neither is the grace of God magic. A lot of us, I think, believe that God will lift us in spite of ourselves—in spite of what we do or are. We trust that God will lift us, in one great pull of his spiritual derrick, out of the mud and place us somewhere among the stars. But God cannot lift us apart from growth. While the lifting is decisive, and while the initiative is God's, God does not take us without allowing us to advance through the painful process of growing. If he does so, God himself is not a moral being.

Neither is the grace of God mere kindness. Some of us look at the wretched world in which we live and say there's grace in the world. I am sure there is grace because, although there is tragedy, still the face of God shines through. There's a silver lining to every cloud. But that isn't the grace of God. For if God's grace is merely the existence of the good in the parallel situation with the bad, then there is no spiritual triumph and God has neither moral meaning nor moral victory.

The grace of God is spiritual victory. The grace of God is the power to overcome. The grace of God is what made it possible for Paul to modify his statement from "What I would I do not" to "I can do all things in him who strengthens me."

The Christian Church has insisted that grace comes through conversion. Conversion often means one thing to the Christian educator and another to the crisis theologian. But the central experience of conversion must be present. Conversion does not have to be sudden and violent. Christian nurture cries out that it can be gradual. But it does have to bring to an end man's effort to run his own show. The converted man lets God take over. There must be an abrupt turning where the center is taken out of the life in which I reign, and God himself must be put upon the throne. I must stop trying to run my own life and surrender to the invading love of the eternal God.

This does not mean that I will be perfect after I am converted. Growth takes time. This is why we are confused about the life of the saints. We observe that saints aren't always easy to live with. The man who stays away from church because he sees the problems of the one who claims to have been converted doesn't realize how difficult it is to make the spiritual pilgrimage.

Yet there is a profound difference between the saint and the man who is not. The man who is a saint has taken selfishness out of the center of his life. He has allowed the love of God to break down the barrier between himself and other selves, between his selfish self and his real self, and between himself and God.

The Power of Love

God doesn't force us to take selfishness out of the center of our lives. But He reaches us in the only way which is consistent with His nature—through the power of His love. God wants to win us. Therefore, "while we are yet sinners," while we are still selfish, while we are still separated from Him, He performs the deed of loving sacrifice. He lays down His life upon the cross in an effort to assure us that His love is reaching across the chasm which our self-centeredness has dug. His love

Different!
Informative!
Authoritative!

What Every Protestant Should Know

by

Paul E. Folkers

A 12-page, 4" x 9" pamphlet outlining the history and major doctrines of Protestantism and showing the vital factors separating it from Roman Catholicism.

5c each; $4.00 per 100

A Protestant Primer

by

Clarence L. Seidenspinner

Laymen will gladly buy this classic discussion of Protestant faith and practice. 64 pages.

50c each;
12 or more, 35c each

Order in Quantity from

TIDINGS
1908 Grand Ave.
Nashville 5, Tenn.

never stops reaching out, even though we stop reaching toward Him. This act of loving service catches at our hearts to pull us back to God. When we understand that He accepts us when we are not acceptable, He gains a response in our hearts. For while we can resist the force of physical power, we cannot quite resist the power of redemptive love. The cross is more than an example which calls us to imitate it and thereby be saved. It is the power of a redemptive act playing upon our hearts until those hardened hearts can no longer resist.

In 1932 Joseph Wechsberg was walking through the streets of Aarau, Switzerland, between trains on his way to Paris. A slow rain was falling, and he felt lost and lonely. As he passed the Stadtkirche he heard the organ. The music was Bach's great Fugue in G Minor. As Wechsberg found the main entrance closed, he slipped through the small side door into the dark church. After the Fugue, the organist played "Nun danket alle Gott." When the music ceased, Wechsberg sat quietly in the pew. After a moment the organist walked swiftly down the aisle and toward the door. Wechsberg stepped out of the darkness and greeted him and spoke briefly of how he was moved by the music. The organist acknowledged Wechsberg's gratitude and slipped quietly out of the church.

In a moment another elderly man came into the sanctuary and told Wechsberg gruffly that the church was now closed. Wechsberg asked who the organist was. The custodian gave an odd look and answered, "You mean to say that you didn't recognize that it was Albert Schweitzer?"

A Man Appears

You and I are lost. We walk alone on the streets of an alien city. We have just gotten off the train from yesterday, and we have not yet boarded the train for an unknown tomorrow. We are anxious to get in out of life's troubling rain. Suddenly a wayside church appears. We enter and sit in the darkness in silence. Out of the shadows a Man quietly appears. Without a word, He climbs upon the cross. There, in a deed of amazing love, He lays down his life. We are overwhelmed by the power of His sacrifice.

As simply as He has come, He disappears. As we sit alone, stunned and confused, not knowing quite what to make of it, we ask ourselves, "Who is it and what does it mean?" And out of the deepest experience of our hearts, a voice answers, "Do you mean to say that you didn't recognize that it was God?"

For a Christian Christmas

Keeping Christmas

by Henry van Dyke

Beautiful 2-color Christmas greeting folder.

$2.00 per 100

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by Bishop Hazen G. Werner

A stirring appeal for a Christian Christmas.

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(with matching envelopes)

An attractive folder emphasizing "Christmas for Christ."

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The Nativity Story in Art

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15¢ each;
50 or more, 10¢ each

TIDINGS
1908 Grand Ave.
Nashville 5, Tenn.

Program of Worship for Reformation Sunday

REFORMATION SUNDAY, the Sunday nearest October 31, is becoming one of the most significant days in Protestantism. This year it falls on October 30.

We have a rich heritage. Yet, many of our people do not understand the basic issues that gave birth to Protestantism. This is one day when the Protestant Church should speak forth.

In hundreds of communities all over the land a city-wide service is held. Such a service dramatizes the unity in Protestantism. Our agreement is greater than our difference. While there are differences in the member Churches, yet we are a part of a family with a common heritage. Reformation Sunday is a good time to lift up the foundations of the Protestant family to which we all belong.

A suggested order of service for Reformation Sunday has been provided through the National Council of Churches. It was prepared this year by the Rev. Edgar S. Brown, Jr., Director of the Department of Worship of the United Lutheran Church in America. The service may be ordered in quantity on a lithographed folder from the Office of Publication and Distribution, National Council of Churches of Christ, 120 East 23rd Street, New York 10, New York. Or it may be reproduced as here adapted from the longer form provided by the National Council.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

The blessings of the Reformation are many. Not the least is the return to the people of their rightful part in the Church's worship. In the Church, which is the Body of Christ, every voice is lifted in penitence and prayer, in petition and intercession, in praise and thanksgiving. All of the faithful are the participants in the sacred drama of which God alone is the beholder. Martin Luther said: "The Christian Church on earth has no greater power or work than such common prayer against everything that may oppose it."

Silent Prayer

Prelude

Hymn—*Come, Holy Ghost*

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire
And lighten with celestial fire;
Thou the anointing Spirit art
Who dost Thy sevenfold gifts impart.

Thy blessed unction from above
Is comfort, life, and fire of love.
Enable with perpetual light
The dullness of our blinded sight.

Martin Luther addresses the Diet of Worms

Anoint our heart and cheer our face
With the abundance of Thy grace.
Keep far our foes; give peace at home;
Where Thou art Guide, no ill can come.

Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And Thee, of Both, to be but One;
That through the ages all along
Thy praise may be our endless song! *Amen.*

Call to Prayer

Minister: O Lord, open Thou my lips.
People: And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.
Minister: Make haste, O God, to deliver me.
People: Make haste to help me, O Lord.
Minister: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:
People: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

Pastoral Prayer, concluding with the **Lord's Prayer**

The Forty-Sixth Psalm

To be read responsively.

God is our Refuge and Strength: a very present help in trouble.
Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed: and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled: though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.
There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God: the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.
God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.
The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: He uttered His voice, the earth melted.
The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our Refuge.
Come, behold the works of the Lord: what desolations He hath made in the earth.
He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth: He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, He burneth the chariot in the fire.
Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.
The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our Refuge.

The Scripture Lessons

Then shall be read the following lessons or such others as shall be appropriate.
I Corinthians 3:11-23
St. John 18:33-37

Hymn—*The Church's One Foundation*

The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
She is His new Creation
By water and the Word;
From heaven He came and sought her
To be His holy Bride,
With His own Blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.

Elect from every nation,
Yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation
One Lord, one Faith, one Birth;
One holy Name she blesses,
Partakes one holy Food,
And to one hope she presses,
With every grace endued.

Two Regional Methodist Youth Fellowship Christian Witness Missions and Workshops

CENTRAL: Chicago, February 10-14, 1956

WESTERN: Denver, February 17-21, 1956

Sponsored by the Methodist Youth Fellowship, the General Board of Education, the General Board of Evangelism, and Conference Planning Committees.

WHERE TO WRITE: Send application for registration to your Conference Director of Youth Work or the Conference Board of Education office. Quotas are limited. Applications will be forwarded to Box 871, Nashville 2, Tennessee.

National Registrars: *Eastern,* Glenn Mingledorff; *Central,* Howard Ellis; *Western,* Leroy Walker.

The Eastern Regional Christian Witness Mission and Workshop was held in Pittsburgh, September 30 to October 4, 1955.

Though with a scornful wonder,
Men see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder,
By heresies distressed;
Yet saints their watch are keeping,
Their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping
Shall be the morn of song.

'Mid toil and tribulation,
And tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace for evermore;
Till, with the vision glorious,
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious
Shall be the Church at rest.
Amen.

Offering

An Anthem may be sung as an Offertory.

Hymn—*A Mighty Fortress*

A mighty fortress is our God,
A trusty Shield and Weapon;
He helps us free from every need
That hath us now o'ertaken.
The old bitter foe
Means us deadly woe;
Deep guile and great might
Are his dread arms in fight:
On earth is not His equal.

With might of ours can naught be done,
Soon were our loss effected;
But for us fights the Valiant One
Whom God Himself elected.
Ask ye, Who is this?
Jesus Christ it is,
Of Sabaoth Lord,
And there's none other God;
He holds the field for ever.

Though devils all the world should fill,
All watching to devour us.
We tremble not, we fear no ill,
They cannot overpower us.
This world's prince may still
Scowl fierce as he will;
He can harm us none;
He's judged, the deed is done,
One little word o'erthrows him.

The Word they still shall let remain,
Nor any thanks have for it;
He's by our side upon the plain
With his good gifts and Spirit.
Take they then our life,
Goods, fame, child, and wife,
When their worst is done,
They yet have nothing won:
The kingdom ours remaineth.
Amen.

The Benediction

Postlude

Silent Prayer

Open It ---Study It

by James V. Claypool
Secretary, Promotion of Bible Use
American Bible Society

WORLDWIDE Bible Reading from Thanksgiving to Christmas presents the greatest challenge to more use of the scriptures than any other experience during the year. Although the Bible is a world best seller, has had extraordinary attention focused on it by the issuance of the Revised Standard Version, and is read more than any other book in the world, yet *altogether too many people fail to read their Bible regularly.*

A Unique Movement

To promote and encourage wider use of the Bible as a source of inspiration and self-help, the churches of America, through the American Bible Society, support Worldwide Bible Reading annually. This will be the twelfth year that the period between Thanksgiving and Christmas has been so designated, with the climax coming on Universal Bible Sunday, December 11, 1955. It is a unique movement in that its sole purpose is to secure simultaneous reading of the same passage of the Bible by people all over the world—in 48 countries of which we know.

The eminent Augustine was led to his conversion in the year 386 when he heard some children at play singing, "Tolle, lege! Tolle, lege!" ("Take up and read! Take up and read!") He applied these words immediately to himself and, retiring to his room, commenced reading the Epistle to the Romans.

The Bible has brought similar transformations in all the years of the Church's progress. As a boy, Methodist Bishop Subhan of North India was a strict Moslem who had absolutely no association with Christians. But a printed Gospel fell into his hands, and he read it. "It was sufficient. It convinced me," he said, and he decided to become a Christian.

Another Bishop abroad has declared, "Among those whom it was my privilege to baptize, I found a surprisingly large number of instances where interest in Christianity was aroused by the purchase of a Gospel or a New Testament from a Bible Society agent."

Spiritual hunger knows no seasons or boundaries. The people who have a famine or partial famine of Bibles seem to want them the most. The less fortunate in our country prize the Book. Refugees from East Germany, the people in war-torn southeast Asia and Korea, in strange lands in Africa, and the almost inaccessible terrain in Latin-America—these and many others want the Word of the Lord to come to them now.

Perennial Story

Printers no longer leave in type for an annual story the perennial report that the Bible is the world's best seller. Sales have mounted up with wings as eagles so that each year outstrips the previous one as to a total of scripture volumes circulated. When sales have increased so markedly, surely some folks must be reading the Bible.

The theme in 1955 for this concerted Bible reading campaign in nearly 50 countries is taken from St. Augustine's conversion story, "Take, Read." No period in modern history calls so insistently for more regular and serious reading of God's written revelation than ours. It is heartening to recall President Eisenhower's words in endorsement of the program: "I prayerfully hope that the success on Worldwide Bible Reading this year will be greater, that the imprint in the hearts and minds of the peoples of the world this year be more pervasive, than ever before."

Less than a hundred miles from Chicago a woman read faithfully the daily passages listed on a Worldwide Bible Reading bookmark handed her as she was visiting a church service. She credits this simple act with being the turning point which resulted three years later in her husband, her two sons, and herself joining the church.

At the end of the long Louisville and Nashville Railroad strike Patrick T. Clancy, a Roman Catholic and chairman of the Memphis area committee of the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, wrote John Wilkinson, secretary of the Memphis YMCA: "I thank you for your understanding of our many problems during the strike of the L. & N. and N. C. & St. L. Railroads. Your morning reading of the scriptures and the accompanying prayers were of great import to our people and were most effective as a weapon against violence on the picket line in Memphis."

Eddie Cantor's Story

Eddie Cantor revealed Bible reading to be "My Greatest Discovery" in an autobiographical story of that title. Part of the story is quoted by permission.

It was in a bookstore in St. Louis that a clerk recognized me and recommended several new books and an old one—a very old one—the Bible. I started reading it that very day—really reading it—not the way I had glanced at it as a kid.

I discovered, as have so many others, that this was all books rolled into one: philosophy, love, science, history. Best of all, the language was simple—the meanings clear. I found the answers to all my questions were in the Bible.

Here was not just a literary masterpiece, but a workable theory for living. I have never known of a better offer: a lifetime of happiness, success, and a silent partner to share your burdens, in exchange for a small down-payment of trust and easy terms of following its precepts.

My personal discovery of the Bible is nothing new to those who also live by it. But there are many who have never discovered it and taken the time to read it through. If they had, there would be more faith and less fear of this Atomic Age. For it is no more ominous than others that we have survived.

It is not surprising that almost every all-time best-seller list includes the Bible. As its readers know, and as I discovered so many years ago, the Bible is not just the book of the month—it is the book of life, eternal, unchanging, ever dependable.*

Cartoonists have often, in times of disturbance and distress, pictured the world as tottering on crutches, a bandage about its head, and sore spots plastered with gauze and adhesive tape. But as long as the Book goes forth in its almost 1,100 tongues and 15,000,000 volumes, the world is not without hope.

Family Bible Reading

Family reading is to be devoutly desired. It is easy to get help each day from the spring of inspiration and spiritual growth, the Bible. Daily devotions need more demonstration and less discussion as to procedures. Those who have tried know that daily devotions can become effective if daily Bible reading is made easy and natural. THE UPPER ROOM is a tool that makes Bible reading easy, natural, and effective.

The Bible does not yield all its truth and wisdom to hasty readers. Families must learn to come to the scriptures with the right patience. Parents and children must learn to come to the scriptures with reverent and open hearts, seeking to learn those deep things of the heart and spirit about which the scriptures speak authoritatively. All we need to know about salvation is within these pages.

Not only may you distribute the book-mark-size reading lists to all your church people. You can help get them placed in schools, hospitals, libraries, stores, and hotels, and in packages and payroll envelopes—even distributed with milk bottles and by window washers.

If you have not yet ordered book-marks, or want an extra poster, or will use the responsive readings prepared, it may not be too late. Send a card at once to your nearest American Bible Society office, or to the Society's Department for Promotion of the Use of the Bible, 310 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois.

A Holy Privilege

The Bible is always going forward, as a brave pioneer, preparing the way of Christ in people's hearts. It is a duty and a privilege to help more and more in furthering the wider reading of God's Holy Writ. No other printed pages mean nearly as much in the spreading and deepening of Christ's salvation among all people.

* Reprinted from *Coronet*, June, 1955. Copyright by *Esquire*, Inc., 1955.

12th Annual

WORLDWIDE BIBLE READING

1955

THANKSGIVING TO CHRISTMAS

How You Can Find Help from Bible Reading

1. Set apart a definite time each day for serious reading of your Bible.

2. Read in company with someone else whenever you can.

3. Read thoughtfully, prayerfully and slowly. "Not snapshots but time exposures" should be the rule.

4. Seek a personal message, ready to respond to it. Your answer to God's message is vital. When He condemns, bow penitently. When He offers light, place your hope on it. When He guides, follow. When He commands, obey.

5. Reread verses which strike fire. Copy out a key verse which seems to speak directly to you. Carry it with you and refer to it throughout the day.

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY
(Dept. U)
450 Park Avenue, New York 22, N.Y.

TAKE READ

November

24 Thanksgiving....Psalms 23:1-6
25....Psalms 46:1-11
26....Psalms 100:1-5
27 Sunday....Matthew 5:1-26
28....Matthew 5:27-48
29....Matthew 6:1-15
30....Matthew 6:16-34

December

1....Matthew 7:1-29
2....Matthew 18:1-14
3....Matthew 18:15-35
4 Sunday....Matthew 22:1-22
5....Matthew 25:1-30
6....Matthew 25:31-46
7....Mark 12:18-44
8....Luke 7:31-50
9....Luke 14:1-14
10....Luke 14:15-35
11 Universal Bible Sunday....I Corinthians 13:1-13
12....Luke 10:25-42
13....Luke 15:1-10
14....Luke 15:11-32
15....John 3:1-17
16....John 14:1-14
17....John 14:15-31
18 Sunday....Romans 8:14-39
19....Romans 12:1-21
20....I John 4:1-21
21....Isaiah 9:2-7
22....Isaiah 11:1-9
23....Isaiah 53:1-12
24....John 1:1-18
25 Christmas....Matthew 2:1-11

For those who will continue reading the Bible the last six days of the year, these passages are recommended:

26....Matthew 2:12-23
27....Matthew 3:1-17
28....Matthew 4:1-25
29....Matthew 8:1-34
30....Matthew 9:1-17
31....Matthew 9:18-38

Won't you make Bible reading a daily practice? Ask your minister for lists, write your church headquarters or request our "Daily Bible Readings—1956" (U-139) from the

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY
(Dept. U)
450 Park Avenue, New York 22, N.Y.

Illustrations on this page show the front and back of the book-mark-size Bible reading lists available from the American Bible Society.

An Early Morning Prayer Meeting

by Felix Sutphin
Pastor, Grenada Methodist Church
Grenada, Mississippi

Grenada Methodist Church is a praying church. It now averages around 100 persons for midweek prayer service. These individuals range in age from primary department to older adult department. The plan we follow is simple. We have 30 minutes of fellowship, with doughnuts, hot chocolate, and coffee from 6:30 A.M. to 7:00 A.M. The prayer service follows from 7:00 to 7:30. After this there is another session for those who had not had doughnuts and coffee prior to the service. During these periods of fellowship, questions are often asked regarding the subject of the morning meditation by the pastor or a layman.

Holy Week Services

This approach to the prayer service grew out of Holy Week services conducted April 3 to 10 by Thomas A. Carruth, one of the staff members of the General Board of Evangelism. The plan of meeting was to have the morning service at 7:00 o'clock daily. On Wednesday morning Mr. Carruth asked the large congregation if it would make a six-weeks trial of prayer meeting at 7:00 in the morning the next Wednesday and thereafter. The response was unanimous. Thus, the program got underway.

Photo at top of page shows the early morning prayer group at Grenada Methodist Church, Grenada, Mississippi.

At the end of the six weeks, the pastor conducted a written survey and passed out questionnaires to the congregation. In this questionnaire the main question was: Shall we continue with the 7:00 o'clock Wednesday morning prayer meeting? Ninety-three questionnaires were returned. Ninety of them were affirmative. The other three were left blank.

All during the summer attendance has remained high. The interest has been very keen, and we have witnessed some remarkable answers to prayer. We follow a more or less fixed pattern of procedure. There is an organ prelude, followed by a favorite hymn. The congregation is invited to name special prayer emphases. These have ranged all the way from one to a dozen. Sometimes the request is for guidance. Again, it is for the sick, or maybe for a project of some group in the church. Whatever it is, it is always something that is of vital concern to those present.

One of the projects which we have carried through was writing a prayer letter to President Eisenhower on the eve of his departure for Geneva. The week prior to the Geneva Conference this letter was dictated and written as a part of the prayer service. Then it was signed by almost every person present. In this letter we assured the President that we would be upholding him as he met with world leaders in Geneva. We indicated that he would have our spiritual support in much the same fashion as Aaron and Hur upheld the hands of Moses in the Old Testament story (Exodus 17).

There were numerous predictions of failure when we embarked upon this program. All of those predictions have proved false. For years and years the midweek service was counted large and very successful if as many as 20 people were present. Though numbers are not everything, our average attendance of 100 at least quadruples anything we had known for four years.

The children come well in the morning. They are beginning to share the sentence prayers and to respond when called upon to pray individually.

Two Prayer Groups

At least two prayer groups have arisen out of the Holy Week meeting mentioned above. One of these meets regularly, just prior to the 7:00 o'clock service; the other, just following. We determined upon the 7:00 o'clock hour and the 30-minute service because it allows those who work and attend school to be at their places at the hour appointed.

We recommend this approach to any church that wishes to meet the needs of more of its members.

The Upper Room in *Australia*

Mr. and Mrs. Ditterich

AUSTRALASIAN readers of THE UPPER ROOM were delighted to know that Dr. J. Manning Potts was visiting the South Pacific area in March of this year. Many were able to meet him. His visit marked the commencement of the sixth year of publication of the Australasian edition, which circulates in the six states of the Commonwealth of Australia and also in the Dominion of New Zealand. In addition, copies find their way to Fiji, Tonga, New Guinea, and Papua.

How It Started

Ralph Sutton, now Superintendent of Wesley Church, Perth, Western Australia, visited the United States in 1949. While there, he inquired of the parent publication at Nashville concerning the possibility of an Australasian edition. Receiving every possible encouragement, he returned to Australia and placed details of the offer in the hands of the Convener of the Methodist General Conference Literature and Publications Committee, E. Keith Ditterich. Mr. Ditterich placed the offer before his own Committee on the one hand and the General Conference Committee on Evangelism on the other. The latter body agreed, through the five State Directors of the Crusade for Christ to act as distributor, and Mr. Ditterich acted as sub-editor and Business Manager for Australasia.

Growth of Circulation

The first edition in March, 1950, totaled 5,000 copies, of which 1,000 were exported to New Zealand. This figure proved quite inadequate, and the total circulation increased steadily. Now 12,000 copies of each issue are required. While this number is small by American standards, it is a larger number than all the State Methodist periodicals put together.

Much more could be achieved with a larger organization, but at the moment the Australasian editor is a circuit minister and his work for THE UPPER ROOM is a spare-time activity.

Latterly, the State Crusade Directors, having completed their terms of appointment, went back to circuit work; and the Methodist Book Depot, Melbourne, Victoria, agreed to take over responsibility for the distribution of all copies. Sales are by no means restricted to Methodist groups. Quite a large number are sold through Presbyterian Depots and to various Protestant Churches. From the beginning, the Epworth Book Room of Auckland, New Zealand, has been a steady agent, handling all sales for New Zealand.

The Gospel in Ink

THE UPPER ROOM has been one of the publications issued by the Literature and Publications Committee in Australia. During the past five years there has been considerable development in the work of that Committee. Over half a million publications have been sold—a good figure for Australian conditions, for hitherto Australia has very largely relied on Great Britain for most of its religious books.

At the present time a Commission is considering the prospects for the establishment of a Publishing House. A campaign is also being started to enlarge the sphere of THE UPPER ROOM, which, whatever developments occur, will remain an independent publication with an ecumenical purpose.

Pictures

From THE UPPER ROOM

(just in time for Christmas)

The publication of this lovely and beautiful book will be welcomed by many people whose appreciation of art has been stimulated by the pictures, and the interpretations that appear with them, on the covers of *The Upper Room*. Here in one book are twenty-nine of the full-color pictures, just as they appeared on the covers of *The Upper Room* and opposite each one is the interpretation that helps make the picture more meaningful.

Here is a handsome gift everyone will appreciate.

Single copy 50 cents. $5.00 per dozen.

Order from THE UPPER ROOM, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

Early Morning Prayer Meeting Takes Church Finances Out of Red

"The other day I was asked by my friend, a minister, who reads THE UPPER ROOM (Japanese edition), to convey his thanks to the American Office of THE UPPER ROOM. He is Rev. Takichi Funakoshi of the Nazarene Church at Yota, Japan. He said: 'I was appointed to my present church four years and a half ago. At that time the church finances were in "the red." It was certain that if there were no change in the church the deficit would continue indefinitely. So I sought the cooperation of the Christians and began having daily sunrise prayer meetings. We decided to use THE UPPER ROOM every morning as our devotional guide. THE UPPER ROOM messages four years ago were truly wonderful. Day by day they seemed to fit exactly our souls' needs, and all who gathered at our prayer meetings were greatly blessed. From the time we began having such blessed prayer meetings, our church finances, too, were blessed, and from that month we have never had a deficit. From that day to this for four years we have continued our sunrise prayer meetings and have continued to use THE UPPER ROOM as our indispensable guide and spiritual food.

" 'I wish to tell you something else which happened about the time we began our prayer meetings. One of the women of our church had been cheated out of more than 100,000 yen by a certain man, and she came to hate him very much. One morning the message we read from THE UPPER ROOM at prayer meeting seemed to pierce her heart, and she repented of the hatred she had harbored in her heart to that day. Before the Lord Jesus, she testified that from her heart she forgave that man's sin. Then a short time later there came the prospect of the money being returned to her and strangely enough it was all repaid! The woman was very happy and gave thanks for the grace of God and for this blessing which came to her through THE UPPER ROOM. Please tell THE UPPER ROOM in America how thankful we are for the blessing our church has received through THE UPPER ROOM.' "

Churches Use Stencil Insets and Mats to

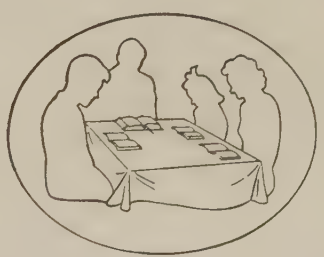
Add Interest to Bulletins and Newsletters

Geared for use in conection with the distribution of each new issue of THE UPPER ROOM is a mat and stencil service that is adding color and usefulness to hundreds of church bulletins and newsletters. Available both as stencil insets for those who produce their bulletins by the mimeograph process and in mat form for those who have their bulletins printed, the service is free.

Each issue includes a drawing of the cover of THE UPPER ROOM and one or two other drawings of use in promoting family worship and personal devotions. Accompanying each mailing is appropriate copy. The user is only asked to send samples of his bulletins and newsletters showing the use of the mats and insets. The illustrations offered for use in connection with the September-October issue of THE UPPER ROOM included a family pew drawing, a family altar drawing, a cherub choir drawing, a schematic map of the world for use in connection with the distribution of the annual World Christian Fellowship number of THE UPPER ROOM and also useful for World Wide Communion Sunday. Also included were drawings of the chalice and the cover of the September-October issue. The drawings are illustrated below and will be sent free upon request.

WORLD-WIDE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The September-October issue of The Upper Room is the annual World-wide Christian Fellowship Number. Only one writer is from the USA. Fifty countries are represented. This issue will be printed in 30 editions in 26 languages. It is estimated that more than ten million people use the three million copies for daily devotions.



Youth from California and Nevada Went to San Francisco to Conduct a

MISSION TO THE

THEY seem awfully young," I thought to myself as I met each new group of two or three youth, baggage in hand, who had arrived to take part in the second Conference-level Christian Witness Mission sponsored by the California-Nevada Conference of The Methodist Church.

A New Adventure

It was Sunday afternoon, July 10. The place was Parkside Methodist Church, San Francisco—host church for the Mission. By late afternoon, 30 youth from towns and cities in northern California and Nevada had arrived, eager to begin what was, for all but two of them, a new adventure in Christian living—witnessing for Christ and His Church.

The host pastor, William S. Traweek ("Brother Si" to the missioners), directed the girls to the church basement where they were to sleep on cots, dormitory-style. The boys had living quarters in a barracks building behind the church. This barracks was being used temporarily as part of the educational plant for the church.

On Sunday evening, Fred Hanes, director of field work for the Mission, dispatched the young people in teams of five to each of the six cooperating churches, all in San Francisco: Epworth, Glide Memorial, Park-Presidio, Parkside, St. Francis, and Temple. There the youth met local MYF'ers with whom they would be working throughout the week. They discussed the purposes of the Mission and learned what plans had been made by the local youth and pastors.

Training for Mission

Training for the Mission began on Monday morning, with all the missioners present at Parkside Church—"home base" throughout the week. Each morning, there were two periods of instruction and discussion: first, the "Motives of Evangelism," presented by Rev. Joe Pritchard, Methodist pastor of Fallon, Nevada; and, second, the "Methods of Evangelism," presented by Rev. Fred Cloud, editor of *Roundtable* and *Christian Action* for the General Board of Education in Nashville, Tennessee.

After lunch and rest-time, the "Disciplines of Christian Living" were discussed under the leadership of Art Thurman, pastor of First Church, Reno, Nevada, and director of the Mission. At 5:00 o'clock each afternoon, the teams of youth were taken to the field work churches, where they had supper. Then they were briefed by the pastor-in-charge as to conditions in their particular section of the city—the type of housing (individual homes or apartment houses), the preponderant religious preference of the neighborhood (for example, some sections were found to be strongly Roman Catholic), and so forth.

Each evening, Monday through Friday, was devoted to visitation. The youth worked from the six participating churches as "bases of operation." On Monday and Tuesday evenings, they conducted a "block-by-block" type of religious survey in sections indicated by the pastors. They made a total of 1,329 calls. Of this number, about a third (472) were "not at home." Forty were Methodists; 795, members of other denominations. These two evenings of calling uncovered 143 prospects: 20 "Methodist preference"; 56 "Protestant preference"; and 67 "no preference."

This taking of a religious census (or "Friendly Community Study"), in addition to locating prospects, broke down some of the fear that the young people felt as they contemplated going into homes to talk with persons about Christ and His Church.

Witnessing for Christ

The real time of testing came on Wednesday evening. For that was the time when youth actually called in the homes of unchurched youth to bear their witness for Christ and to invite them to "come with us to Christ." They had been trained with the "Two-by-Two" Turn Over Chart and the youth evangelism flip chart. They had studied *Here's How*. They had discussed problems. They had done some role playing. But this was it, the real thing—confronting real persons with a real decision. They went out feeling scared, unsure of themselves.

But they came in at the end of the evening bubbling over with enthusiasm.

Most of these youth had discovered, for the first time, that they *could* talk about the deep places of the spiritual life, that they *could* invite a person to accept Christ and to become part of the fellowship of His Church. And the discovery brought them deep joy!

"I've never felt so wonderful in my whole life!" exclaimed a 16-year-old girl who had seen a couple accept Christ and vow to join the Church. "It seemed that they were just *waiting* for someone to ask them to make the decision," a 17-year-old boy marvelled. We reminded him that he was preceded into that home by the Spirit of Christ—that neither he nor the persons on whom he called were in this venture alone.

On Wednesday and Thursday evenings, the teams of two made a total of 124 calls, 68 being "not home." Of the 66 prospects interviewed, nine professed faith in Christ; 35 vowed to join the MYF; one requested a transfer of membership; and six requested permission to join a church membership training class—a total of 51 commitments.

A Continuing Program

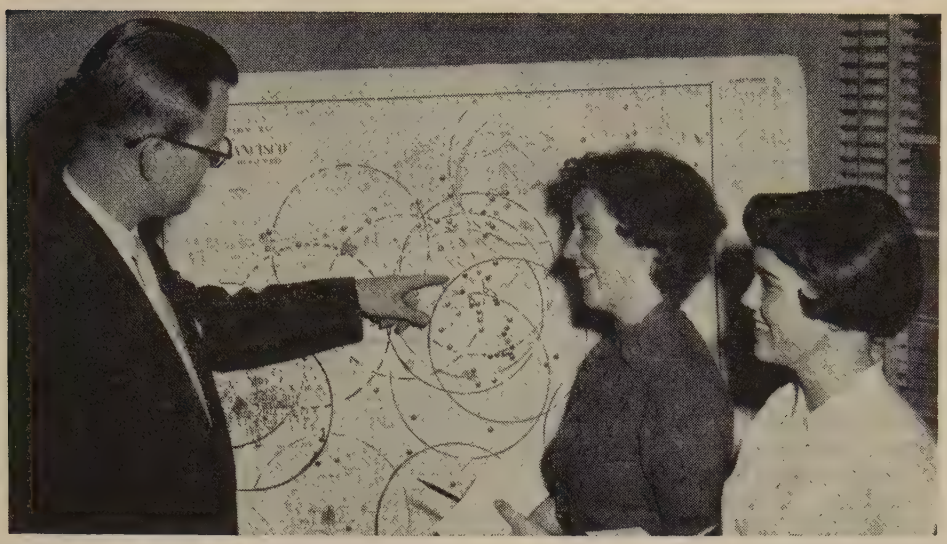
On Friday evening, after an hour of visitation, the missioners sat down with the pastors and youth in the six churches and discussed ways of continuing a program of witnessing in the local church. They also shared their ideas as to how they might carry on a program of systematic youth-to-youth witnessing when they got "back home."

Saturday was devoted to rest and recreation, including a picnic in a San Francisco park. On Sunday morning, the missioners visited the church school classes in the six churches and, at the morning worship, spoke briefly to the congregation, telling of their experiences during the week and what Christian Witness had come to mean to them.

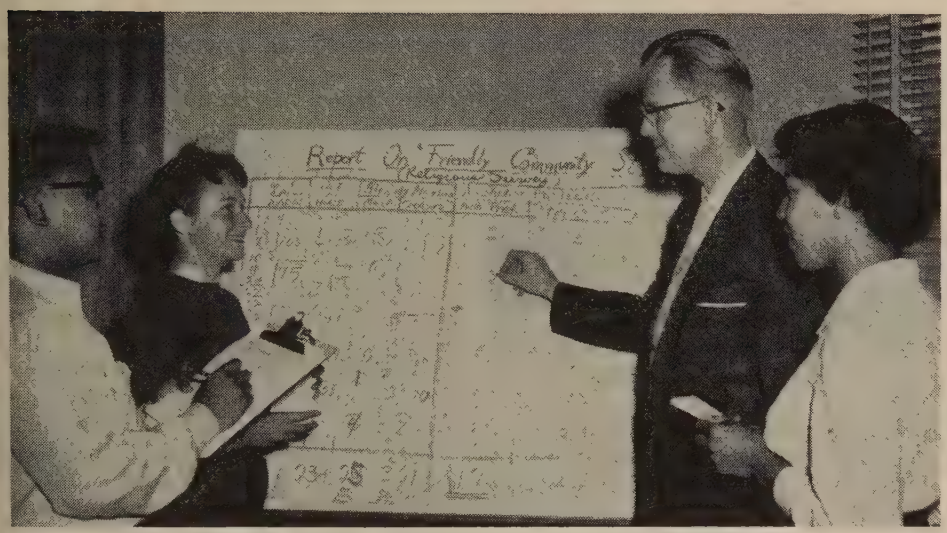
The Mission closed Sunday afternoon, July 17, with a period of evaluation and sharing. This was followed by a communion service that was a time of dedication for all the members of the group. The Mission ended—but the enthusiasm for witnessing that was sparked in San Francisco will last for years to come—perhaps for a lifetime!

CITY

by Fred Cloud
Assistant Editor
Youth Publications
Methodist Board of Education

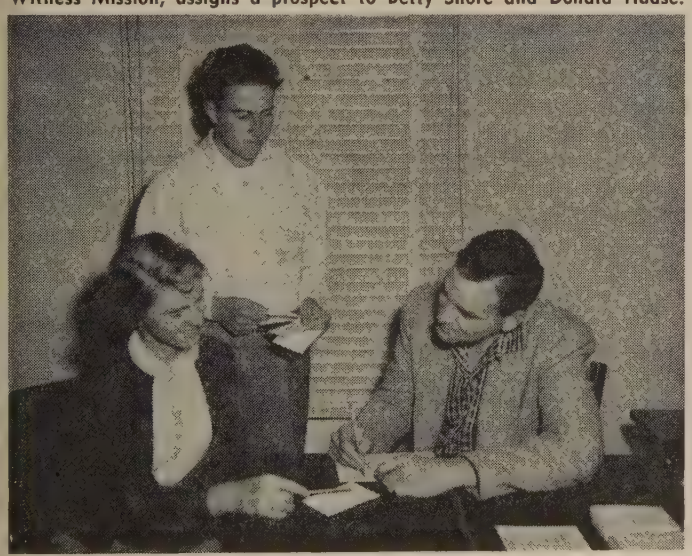


The Rev. Fred Cloud, author of this article and editor of *Roundtable* and *Christian Action*, instructed the young people in methods of evangelism. Here he points out to Linda Berry and Marianne Corson an area in the city of San Francisco to be surveyed. The circles indicate Methodist parishes. A block-by-block religious survey was made, working from the churches outward.



Richard Mazon, Diane Yount, and Carol Conway report to Mr. Cloud the results of their evening of religious census-taking. "Methodist Prospects" includes those who express a "Methodist preference," or "Protestant preference," or even "No preference."

The Rev. Fred Hanes, pastor of St. Francis Methodist Church in San Francisco, and director of field work for the California-Nevada Christian Witness Mission, assigns a prospect to Betty Shore and Donald Haase.



Donald Haase and Betty Shore visit with Janice Berg in her home. Janice committed her life to Christ and expressed a desire to enroll in a church membership training class.

NEBRASKA METHODISM MARCHES FORWARD FOR CHRIST

by J. Alan Justad
Associate Pastor
Trinity Methodist Church
Grand Island, Nebraska

THE air was tense with excitement during the Nebraska Annual Conference as the report on evangelism was read. It was something to be excited about. Modern day miracles had happened because church members had become concerned about their unchurched neighbors. Broken homes had been brought back to life. Persons chained to bad habits had found a new direction for their lives. Laymen and ministers alike had found a new thrill in their church. It gave them a boost of spiritual pride to see the "family of families," which they had won, take the vows of membership.

New Life and Hope

Churches which for years had reported no gain sprang to leadership and stardom as their percentage of increase in new members rated far above their larger sister churches. These churches were thrilled to think that they had finally arrived in "the big league" of their Conference. Inactive outpoints were given new life and hope. Three completely new congregations were formed as a result of their zeal for evangelism. The financial beginning for these new congregations has come through the "1000 Club," a Conference-wide plan of concerned people for those throughout their state without a church home. The greatest insight which is being brought anew to Nebraska Methodists is that there are persons in every town and countryside who have no church home and are just waiting for an invitation to become an active part of the Living Church.

How did all of this come about? When there is a will, God always shows us the way. Certainly, there was prayer on the part of many for a revival of the evangelistic zeal which always characterizes a Methodist advance.

Eugene Golay, now a staff member of the General Board of Evangelism, became Conference Secretary of Evangelism shortly after World War II. In 1949 he conducted a visitation evangelism campaign in the Grand Island church. This church led in Nebraska and in the nation in the ensuing years as it continued to employ visitation evangelism seven days a week, year in and year out. As a result over 500 new members have united with the church each year for the past six years. This particular church, as a result of this type of evangelism, has grown from a membership of 1,800 to 4,400 members in the past seven years.

What makes this record even more amazing is the fact that this town has a population of only 29,000 people. The secret is to be found in prayer and concern for unchurched people on the part of laymen in the church. On the

Symbolism of Nebraska's advance.

reverse side of the financial pledge there was placed a spiritual pledge with stated, "I will strive to win at least one new family for Christ's Kingdom and His Church this coming year."

This is a layman's movement. The laymen of the Conference began to see the great possibilities in each of their own communities. Churches all across the Conference began to catch the spirit of "each-one-reach-one." For many years, evangelism had meant mass meetings and spirited preaching—all of it preacher-centered. The new method, visitation evangelism, enlisted every man, woman, and young person in the church who was able to knock on a door. Every community in Nebraska where this method was employed felt the direct results of its power. For evangelism had taken its rightful place in the church. Each church found that when evangelism is active in a church many-sided reactions occur. A spirit of friendliness was felt on the part of new families who had never been welcomed into the community before. Vital groups of fellowship, both adult and youth, were newly formed. When asked why they had not joined in years past, new families almost invariably answered, "No one ever asked us before." Church budgets were raised in direct proportion to the new spirit of family-winning.

All of this praying and preparation was laying the ground-work for the advance which was led by a great Bishop, H. Bascom Watts, who had thoroughly preached and lived evangelism throughout his entire ministry. His last charge before being consecrated as Bishop, Boston Avenue Methodist Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma, had grown from 2,000 to 5,700 members during the time of his pastorate there. Upon arrival in the Nebraska Area, he set out immediately to acquaint himself with every charge, both large and small, in his Area. He carefully noted their needs.

When the emphasis on evangelism was stressed for the year 1952-53, the Bishop put all his efforts behind what he considered one of the most pressing needs in all of the churches in the Area. Separate inter-District campaigns were held. Local pastors carefully prepared their prospect lists and recruited callers for the week. The visiting pastor from another District held a preaching service on Sunday morning and briefed the callers for the first visitation on Sunday afternoon. Calling every evening of the week, with report meetings following, proved by far the most effective method of reaching the new families.

This was the kick-off. Such great enthusiasm and response ensued in the churches where there was careful preparation and calling that year around evangelistic Fishermen's Clubs were formed and continue to work each month at this business of the Kingdom.

Leads Jurisdiction

Nebraska led the whole Jurisdiction. When the report was read, 12,000 new members had become an active part of the churches. Fifty per cent of these persons had come by profession of faith. One hundred and twenty churches had raised their membership by 10 per cent, and many exceeded this percentage.

The author is shown making an evangelistic visit at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Barnhart.

Blueprint

For Lay Visitation Evangelism

by Morris Gustin
Layman, Community Methodist Church
Dayton, Ohio

IT seemed almost incredible that I had won 107 new members to the church during the past Conference year through visitation evangelism!

But when my pastor made out his Annual Conference report the last of April, the records showed that out of 229 new members received into the church last year I alone had won 107.

What had happened that I, who had "dabbled" in lay visitation evangelism for 15 years or more with very ordinary success, should suddenly become outstandingly successful?

A Simple Answer

The answer is very simple. In fact, one may tend to discredit it, thinking it is too simple to be effective. But, as I look back over the past few months and analyze my method, I can see that it has worked in a miraculous way.

I had always been interested in the idea of the laity seeking to win men and women to Christ and His Church. But it was seldom done, except during special campaigns. It was during such a campaign last September that my success began.

We met at the church each night, got our assignments, were teamed up with someone, and went out to make our calls. The pastor briefed us as well as he could on our prospects and prayed for our success.

A Spiritual Need

Yet, in spite of that, it seemed rather a "cold turkey" proposition to me. Our prospects were still merely names and addresses to us. We knew little about them. We were not concerned about them as individuals. We took no time to consider our prospects as fellow human beings whom we were going out to win to Christ and the Church. And, arriving at their homes, we probably impressed them as being rather indifferent and unconvincing. The poor results that followed were inevitable under such circumstances!

Then one night it happened! When an uneven number of visitors showed up we could not all go out in pairs, so I volunteered to go alone. This was something I had been secretly wanting to do for some time. I got six commitments. I was so thrilled that I could hardly sleep when I got home that night. Like a fisherman after making his first great catch, I was an enthusiastic fisherman from that night. Now, after having won 107 new members to the church in eight months (September through April), I am convinced that the most important thing is to be vitally concerned about those whom we should win.

A Simple Method

Here is the method I use.

I always go alone. This in itself is not important. But for me it works best. I can control the conversation when I am alone. I can get out earlier in the evening since I do not have to wait for someone else. I can go oftener and at my convenience.

I keep a list of prospects in my pocket all the time and go over the list often, sorting, re-sorting, and praying about the prospects individually. I wonder what kind of persons they are while I am praying and meditating about them. In doing this I seem to become attracted to certain names. On these names I concentrate my attention and plan to call on them next. In this

manner I become interested in them and am eager to call on them.

I pray just before leaving home. I pray as I ring their doorbell. I am sure that when they open the door my countenance must plainly show that I am interested in them. (There is no substitute for love and prayer in winning others to Christ and the Church.)

I introduce myself, telling them who I am and saying, enthusiastically, that I am from the church. Usually I am promptly invited in. If not, I hasten to say, with a smile, "I have been wanting to get over here to see you folks for a long time. If you have a few minutes, I would like to come in and talk with you about the church." Unless there is some very urgent reason that they cannot see me at that time they invite me in. Otherwise I make an appointment to call back later.

I visit as often as I can. One will lose his enthusiasm if he permits himself to get out of practice. Two or three nights a week and Sunday afternoon are excellent if one can manage to give that much time. One night each week is the minimum for effective work.

I never tell my prospects that I am calling in the interest of the *Church,* but let them know by my attitude that I am calling in *their* interest. One must start where he finds them—interested in themselves—and gradually lead them to an interest in the church.

Diplomacy

I never tell the prospects that the church needs them, but I try to point out in a diplomatic way how and why they need the church. That is my method of operation.

Let me sum up my experience in a few statements. We must be vitally interested in those whom we wish to win. We must condition ourselves for the interview by prayer and meditation. We must pray for the Holy Spirit to prepare the hearts and minds of our prospects for the interview. We must be enthusiastic, sincere, friendly, courteous, to the point. If we go visiting with another person, we must make sure that we are of one accord. We must visit regularly to attain good results.

Lay Visitation Evangelism is the most thrilling experience there is when good results are obtained. Any layman who can pray and follow a few simple rules can be successful. The thrill which comes when one sits in church Sunday after Sunday and sees all about him dozens of persons who are there because he was concerned enough to visit them is a most rewarding experience.

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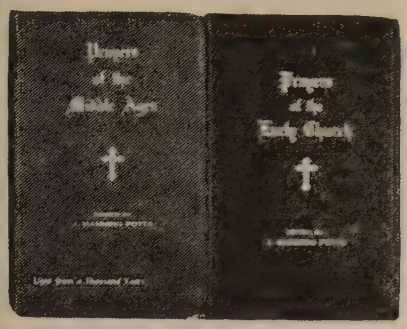

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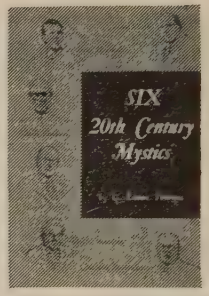

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Preparation for better membership through the use of the turn over chart "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians," available from *Tidings*.

Preparation for Church Membership

by Benjamin F. Holme
Superintendent
Detroit District
Detroit Conference

FROM six to seven hundred thousand new members are received into The Methodist Church each year. Usually, new members are received at the Sunday morning service of worship in the presence of the congregation.

Unfortunately, a considerable number of these new members soon grows careless and becomes inactive. The net gains in membership are relatively much smaller than statistics on reception indicate. After a period of two years, and when the requirements of the *Discipline* have been met, these inactive members are dropped from the rolls of the Church. The manner of their going is less dramatic and public than that of their reception into the Church. However, since investigation and Quarterly Conference approval are now required before members can be removed from the fellowship of the Church, the pruning of Church membership rolls is not the casual scratching of a pen through a name, as once it may have been.

Careful Preparation Needed

Neither the candidate himself nor the Church is much benefited when those received are only casual joiners. One recalls the words of the "Order for Receiving Persons as Preparatory Members": "Dearly Beloved, that none may be admitted hastily into the Church, we receive persons who seek fellowship with us into a preparatory membership, in which they may be properly instructed, and also give proof, both to themselves and to the Church, of the sincerity and depth of their convictions and of the strength and purpose to lead a new life." Moreover, every person uniting with the Church is entitled to know what his Church believes as well as the personal obligations which he assumes when he becomes a member.

The growing practice, therefore, of carefully preparing candidates for Church membership is a good one.

Preparation for Church membership is especially necessary for children and young people and for those entering the Church on profession of faith. Preparation is not amiss for those entering the membership of The Methodist Church by transfer from other communions and even from other Methodist churches if such persons have not been active in the recent past.

The responsibility for adequate training in membership rests with the minister of the local church.

The preparation of children for reception into the Church may well begin in the sixth grade classes of the church school. Here boys and girls may be enrolled in a churchmanship class, and the period from September or October until the time of the reception ceremony in the spring devoted to the teaching of subjects calculated to train children in the meaning of the step they are about to take. Included would be church history and biography, with especial stress upon our Protestant and Methodist heritage; Christian beliefs; Christian ritual and the sacraments; and meaning of the membership obligations. The Methodist church school materials for the sixth grade contain a large emphasis upon preparation for church membership.

Minister's Responsibility

Although the training of the churchmanship class would be largely in the hands of the church school teachers, the minister of the church should personally teach the children about the ritual and the sacraments and the meaning of the membership obligations. Moreover, the minister should make the preparation of young people and adults his own responsibility.

Both the importance of preparation for membership and the breadth of the field to be covered raise the question of the length and number of the training sessions. In the case of children in the church school the sessions would extend over a period of months. With respect to adults the general practice seems to range from one training session for those being received on letters of transfer to six sessions for those being received on profession of faith. Local conditions will define these matters in the individual churches.

Impressive Ceremony

The reception service itself should be dignified, serious, and without any appearance of hurry. Everything about the service should convey the impression that the step being taken is among the most important in human experience. The stated ritual of the church for the reception of members should be used and not an informal, extemporized ceremony. Nothing can be more impressive for the occasion than the familiar words of our stately ritual, conveying the sense of religious authority and the richness of a long and grand tradition focusing upon those who are the latest to unite with the ancient Christian fellowship. Incidentally, one believes that it is better taste to speak of "receiving" new members into the church than of "taking them in." In the same line of thought, people "unite" with the fellowship of the Christian Church rather than "join" it.

It may be a matter of personal preference, but this writer believes that greater significance is attached by the candidate to his reception if new members are received individually or in family or other small groups. However, the reception of a larger group of children, after months together in a course of preparation, can be made very meaningful not only for the children themselves, but for their parents and the entire congregation. When it is thought desirable to receive a large group at the same time, the service of reception should be conducted in an atmosphere of humble gratitude to God. Any hint of boasting over a great achievement on the part of the minister or church in receiving a large group of members is certainly offensive and depreciates the solemn meaning of the act on the part of the candidates.

Six Steps

Every minister should be acquainted with G. Ernest Thomas' little booklet, "Assimilating New Members," which sets forth six steps in the preparation, reception, and assimilation of new members into the Church. Other booklets and materials recommended include:

Membership Manual of The Methodist Church for Boys and Girls, Mary A. Jones
Membership Manual for Teen Agers, Leila B. Rumble
Membership Manual for Young People and Adults, James S. Chubb
I Belong, Hoover Rupert
At the Door of the Church, Lucius H. Bugbee

(*Editor's note: Excellent for training all members, both new and established, is the* TIDINGS *Turn Over Chart,* "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians.")

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b) Christian Christmas giving:
—Give gifts and not exchange presents
—Give non-alcoholic gifts
—Give gifts to those who cannot return them
c) Hold Christian family celebrations at Christmas
—Use Upper Room devotions for the day
—Have non-alcoholic parties
d) Include a Christian benevolent cause in your gift list
e) Attend Christmas worship services

II. Local Church

a) Have a visitation evangelism program during the Advent season
(Visit at least one night a week during Advent)
b) Receive new members on Christmas Sunday
c) Promote the use of Christian Christmas greeting cards
d) Play Christmas carols on amplifying system
e) Have a Nativity scene on the church lawn
f) Prepare a window display in a store
g) Secure promotion materials from TIDINGS
h) Plan noon day services during Christmas week
i) Put spot on TV and platter of spots on radio stations
j) Have a Christmas drama
k) Plan a special benevolent cause or advance special for a "white gift" service

III. Community—churches, service clubs, schools, ministerial associations

a) Hold Christ's birthday parade—floats by churches
b) Use billboards—window displays in harmony with Christ's birthday
c) Use movie trailers—TV spots—radio platter
d) Have living Nativity scene
e) Ask local radio and TV stations to refrain from advertising alcoholic beverages during Advent
f) Ask groups of businessmen to discourage the use of alcoholic beverages in office Christmas parties
g) Enlist stores and clubs in using Christian art at Christmas
h) Ask local newspapers to carry editorials and articles on "Keep Christ in Christmas"

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_____ **Self-Help for New Members,** by Ray W. Ragsdale. **15¢ each; 10 or more, 10¢ each** _____

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_____ **The Evangelistic Message of the Christmas Conference,** by Bishop Paul N. Garber **5¢ each; $4.00 per 100** _____

_____ **Rediscovering Christmas,** by G. Ernest Thomas **50¢ each; 12 or more, 35¢ each** _____
Practical ways in which to make this a Christian Christmas.

_____ **Christmas for Christ in the Home,** by Gordon Pratt Baker **$1.50 per 100** _____
Specific suggestions concerning the observance of Christmas in the home. Two colors.

_____ **Keeping Christmas,** by Henry Van Dyke **$1.50 per 100** _____
Beautiful, two-color, Christmas greeting card folder.

_____ **Needed: an Evangelistic Christmas,** by Bishop Hazen G. Werner **$2.00 per 100** _____

_____ **A Christmas Creed,** by Walter Russell Bowie **$2.00 per 100** _____

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_____ **Posters** (17"x22") **10¢ each; 6 for 50¢** _____
To be used in vestibules, on bulletin boards, etc.

_____ **Window Stickers** (in pads of 100) **50¢ per 100** _____
For use on windows, etc. Printed on gummed side

_____ **Celluloid Buttons** (minimum order, 50) **$3.00 per 100** _____
Bear the "Christmas Is for Christ" slogan.

_____ **Auto Bumper Strips** (minimum order, 25) 2 colors **50 for $6.00** _____

_____ **Billboard Posters** (Six colors) **$10.00 each** _____
Regular roadside billboard size—19 feet 4 inches by 8½ feet.

_____ **Lawn Signs** (3x5 feet) **$5.00 each** _____
Beautiful 11-color canvas lawn sign.

_____ **Printed Letters** **$1.00 per 100** _____
For churches to mail to members promoting a Christian Christmas observance.

_____ **Christmas Cards** (with matching envelopes) **$3.00 per 100** _____
An attractive card folder emphasizing "Christmas for Christ."

_____ **1-column Mat** **15¢ each** _____
For newspapers and printed church bulletins

_____ **2-column Mat** (for publicity) **20¢ each** _____
Give this mat to your newspaper with a Christmas news story and article.

_____ **Large Newspaper Mat** **50¢ each** _____
A 2-column mat, 7 inches deep, bearing a Christmas message urging that "Christmas Is for Christ."

For Church Attendance Material Order Blanks, write TIDINGS. Also, See Other Side.
Sign Name, Address, etc., on Other Side.

For Your Church Attendance Emphasis

CHURCH ATTENDANCE PACKET

Although each of these packets contains 16 different items, in necessary quantities, the price of each packet is within the reach of every church—only 3¢ per member—and the extra attendance and loyalty generated will bring enough extra financial returns to more than pay for the packet. But don't order a packet for that reason. Order it for the good of your church and the glory of God.

Check Packet Desired

	Church Membership	*Price*
_____ No. 1	100	$ 3.00
_____ No. 1½	150	4.50
_____ No. 2	200	6.00
_____ No. 2½	250	7.50
_____ No. 3	300	9.00
_____ No. 3½	350	10.50
_____ No. 4	400	12.00
_____ No. 4½	450	13.50
_____ No. 5	500	15.00
_____ No. 5½	550	16.50
_____ No. 6	600	18.00
_____ No. 6½	650	19.50
_____ No. 7	700	21.00
_____ No. 7½	750	22.50
_____ No. 8	800	24.00
_____ No. 8½	850	25.50
_____ No. 9	900	27.00
_____ No. 9½	950	28.50
_____ No. 10	1,000	30.00

Mark Price of Your Packet Here $_____

IN THE PACKET
BUT MAY BE ORDERED SEPARATELY

_____ **Church Loyalty Assignment Envelopes**
10¢ a dozen; 75¢ per 100 _____

_____ **Friendly Visitor's Agreement Cards**
50¢ per 100 _____

_____ **Church Attendance Visitor's Assignment Cards**
60¢ per 100 _____

_____ **Sheets of 100 Stamps** 20¢ per sheet of 100 _____

_____ **Church Member's Loyalty Covenant Cards**
50¢ per 100 _____

_____ **My Record of Attendance Cards** 50¢ per 100 _____

PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Only samples of the following helpful materials are in the Packet. For quantities, order them separately, and get extra results.

_____ **Letterheads,** 8½x11 inches, mimeograph paper
75¢ per 100 _____

_____ **Printed Letters,** 8½x11 inches $1.00 per 100 _____

_____ **Church Bulletins** $1.00 per 100 _____

_____ **Bulletin Inserts** (5 in set) 5¢ per set _____

_____ **Personal Invitation Cards** $1.00 per 100 _____

_____ **"Fill a Pew Plan"** leaflet 10 or more, 3¢ each _____

_____ **Hymnal Bands** $1.00 per 100 _____

_____ **Certificate of Loyalty** $1.00 per 100 _____

_____ **Special Covenant Sunday Service** 1¢ each _____
Minimum order, 50.

BASIC BOOKLETS

_____ **Local Church Booklet**
10¢ each; 6 for 50¢; 10 or more, 8¢ each _____
The "How" booklet for a church and the various committees in promoting the World Wide Church Attendance Movement. One or more copies come in the Church Attendance Packet and also in the "Idea Packet."

_____ **Community Booklet**
10¢ each; 6 for 50¢; 10 or more, 8¢ each _____
The "How" booklet for a civic club, chamber of commerce, ministerial association, or other agency that desires to sponsor the Movement. One copy is in every Church Attendance Packet and "Idea Packet."

_____ **"Idea Packet"** $1.00 each _____
An envelope that contains one each of most of the smaller items in this folder, including the two basic booklets above and the "Pastor's Resource Booklet." When churches or clubs desire samples of various items, this is the Packet to order. Not necessary to order this, however, if you are ordering a Church Attendance Packet.

_____ **Pastor's Resource Booklet** 25¢ each _____
A book with ideas gathered from many sources that should be helpful if adapted and tried.

OTHER MATERIALS

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

TIDINGS, Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

PLEASE FILL MY ORDER AS CHECKED. **Total Amount of Order**_____

( ) Payment enclosed ( ) **Charge to treasurer** ( ) Charge to my account

_____
Rev., Mr., Mrs., Miss

_____
NAME

_____
ADDRESS

_____
Church Treasurer

_____
Address

Date _____ **Order placed by**_____

Please sign, do not type, your name in the space provided above.

Copies of the 11-inch by 13½-inch poster from which this page has been reproduced may be obtained free of charge by writing The Upper Room, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee.

Tidings Presents

OUTSTANDING NEW BOOK

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The Evangelistic Message of the Bible

A stimulating discussion of the Evangel from its scriptural origins to its inspiration in the New Life. Laymen will welcome its simple but positive affirmation of faith. Pastors will go to it again and again as a springboard for preaching.

50c each; 12 or more, 35c each

FOR YOUR PROTESTANT EMPHASIS

Why I Am a Protestant

by John L. Ferguson

A forthright statement of the Protestant heritage and position is contained in this two-color, six-page tract. It should be given to every member.

(Tract-of-the-Month Club members will receive it automatically)

$2.00 per 100

My Bible and I

by Walter Russell Bowie

Just right for your Protestant emphasis on the scriptures is this two-color, eight-page tract.

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